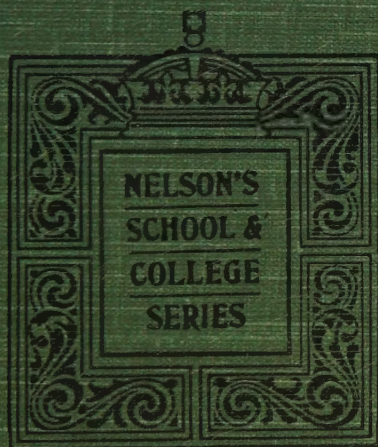


A SHORT HISTORY
OF
ANCIENT GREECE

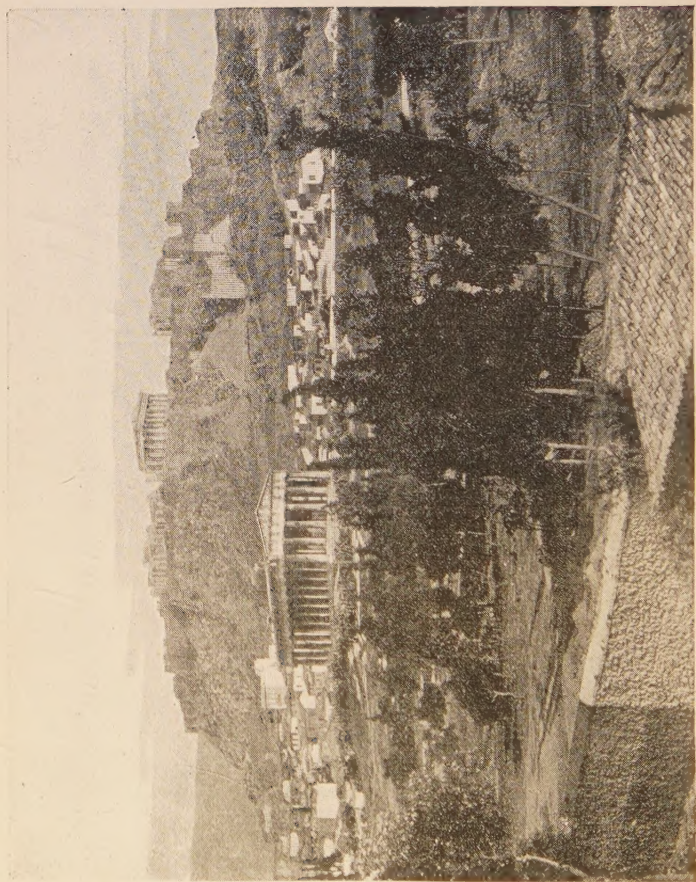
(JOHNSTONE)



ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.



A SHORT HISTORY OF
ANCIENT GREECE.



VII
VIEW OF ATHENS AT THE PRESENT DAY.
(From a Photograph.)

A SHORT HISTORY
OF
ANCIENT GREECE

For the Young

BY
HENRY JOHNSTONE



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS

London, Edinburgh, and New York

1900

P R E F A C E.

THIS book contains absolutely nothing original except the mistakes, which are my own. For the rest, I have pillaged such modern writers and glanced at such ancient ones as seemed likely to serve my purpose, which was to make a history that children might care to read and grown people be glad to have read. But my more particular acknowledgments are due to Mr. Oman of All Souls' College; if any one finds a good thing in my book, he may be pretty sure of finding it better stated in Mr. Oman's. One of the illustrations in the book is taken, by permission, from the Gardiner Collection at the Edinburgh Academy; for this my thanks are due to the authorities of the Academy and to Dr. G. B. Gardiner. I desire, also, to make special acknowledgment to Mr. C. G. Cash, of the Edinburgh Academy, and Mr. T. Macvey, Rector of the Waid Academy, Anstruther, who were so kind as to go over the proofs for me, and made many valuable suggestions.

HENRY JOHNSTONE.

THE EDINBURGH ACADEMY,
March 1900.



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A SHORT HISTORY OF ANCIENT GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

CIVILIZATION AND GREECE.

Why You should read about Greece.

THE ancient Greeks, about whom you will read in this book, lived many hundreds of years ago, in a small country quite at the other side of Europe from our own; and the modern Greeks are not at all a very powerful or important people. Perhaps, therefore, you will wonder why you should read about the Greeks, instead of about the French, or the Germans, or some other people whose country lies nearer to ours, or who are of more importance nowadays. I will try to tell you some of the reasons why you ought to know about the ancient Greeks.

Three thousand years ago nearly all the people in Europe were savages. In those parts of Europe where people are now most different from savages, there were only wild and ignorant tribes, such as now live in the middle of Africa. They were not black or brown, as the African savages are, but they were just as stupid and cruel, living a life almost like that of wild beasts, and scarcely thinking of anything but food and shelter. They did not understand that it was

wrong to be greedy and false and cruel, and so they went on doing wrong, without even trying to do right, because they hardly knew what right was. This is what being a savage means—living a beast-like life, and not really knowing what the right kind of life for a man is.

What Civilization is.

The opposite kind of life to this bad way of living we call a civilized life, or civilization. Civilized people are quite different from beasts: they have laws which they obey, even when it would be more pleasant to disobey them; and, besides the laws, they have rules in their own minds about right and wrong, and know that they ought to be brave, and truthful, and good-tempered, helpful, and not hurtful, to their neighbours. And once they have learned to help one another, they soon find that they can do wonderful things to improve their country and make it better to live in. They can build cities in which it is safe to live; make roads and bridges, so that it is easy to travel and to move goods about; grow good crops, and drain useless marshes. And the more civilized they grow, the better laws they make; thus the country becomes safer and better to live in, and there is less waste, and folly, and wickedness in it. But no country is perfectly civilized. Perhaps you think our own country is so; but if you consider how many bad and stupid things are done in it, how much drunkenness there is, and what trouble the police have to prevent stealing, and murder, and rioting, you will see that we are only partly civilized ourselves. Still, if we try our best, we shall always be growing more civilized.

Besides savages and civilized people, there is a third kind, whom we call barbarous people, or barbarians. These are neither so good as civilized people, nor so bad as savages. Perhaps it will help you to have an example of each of these three kinds of people. The Ashantees, in West Africa, are savages, for they are cruel and stupid, and little better than

beasts. The Afghans, who live in a part of Asia which touches India, are barbarians; for, though they have some big towns, and can make a good many things for their own use, still they are cruel and false; they have not done much to improve their country and make it better to live in, and they have not good laws. The French, or the Germans, or we ourselves, are civilized peoples, because, though we have drunkards and law-breakers among us, most of us try to obey the laws and live properly. Our laws are good and fair, and we have done a great deal to make our countries better to live in, by draining the wet lands, and by making roads and bridges, railways and harbours, and other things that are useful to people who are not content to live like beasts.

How Civilization spread.

Now get the map that shows you Europe, Asia, and Africa all at once. Find the Persian Gulf, and from the head of the gulf—the end that runs farthest into the land—lay a ruler over one corner of the Caspian Sea, and along the Ural Mountains, till it touches the Kara Sea in the north. Now, if you call everything that lies to the left hand of the ruler the West, and everything that lies to the right hand the East, I may tell you at once that with the East we shall have very little to do in this book. The oldest civilized country in the East is China; but with China, and with the East generally, our part of the world, the West, has till quite lately had hardly any dealings. So we need not trouble ourselves about the East just now.

In the West, the country that was first civilized was either Egypt or some one of the countries of South-Western Asia, lying between the foot of your ruler and Egypt. After that came Greece; for Greece was the first country in Europe to be civilized, while all other Europeans were still no better than savages. So you see what great changes come about in the world's history. Europe, now the most civilized continent, was once more savage than the better parts of

Asia ; and Egypt, which is in Africa, now the least civilized continent of all, was once the most civilized country in the West.

But there are different kinds of civilization, and the kind which they had in Egypt and in Persia—a country in South-Western Asia, which was, for a time, the greatest in all the West—was not a very good kind. They had great cities, with strong walls, and large, ornamented buildings. They had powerful kings, with great armies. They had laws, and knew how to write, so that things were not forgotten among them so quickly as they are among savages. But their kings were often very cruel, and their laws were not good or fair ; the poor people, and even the rich, were like slaves to the kings, and must have found it hard to be either good or happy. It is much the same in China now, where there are great cities and regular laws ; but it is not good to have to live in those cities or to keep those laws. In fact, though the Egyptians and the Persians were civilized, compared with the savages round about them, they were barbarians, compared with the later Greeks and Romans, just as the Chinese are barbarians now, compared with the nations of Western Europe. In speaking of very ancient times, however, we call the Egyptians and Persians civilized, because they were more civilized than other nations were then.

What the Ancient Greeks did for Civilization.

The Greeks did two great things. First, they borrowed civilization from those people outside Europe, and so were the first civilized people in Europe. Second, they improved what they had borrowed so much that they made quite a different thing of it, so that now we hardly think of the Egyptian and Asiatic civilization as real civilization at all. That is the great reason why we remember the ancient Greeks and read about them still. And we ought not to forget that much of what is best in our own civilization actually came to us from the Greeks through the Romans.

The Romans learned from the Greeks, and we of the farther west learned in turn from the Romans.

Three Great Thoughts.

How did the Greeks make such great improvements in what they borrowed? What thoughts had they in their heads, about the right way for men to live, that the Egyptians and Asiatics had not? They had three chief thoughts, and I hope you will get them into your head too, for they are just as good and just as necessary thoughts now as they were three thousand years ago. They were these: first, that it is good for people to be free; next, that it is good for people to know the truth and love it; and last, that it is good for people to see and to hear what is beautiful, and bad for them to see and to hear what is ugly.

Try to understand these thoughts rightly. First, being free does not mean being allowed to be as stupid and mischievous as you like; that is being a savage, not being free. It means, in the first place, living under wise and fair laws, made for your good, and not made to please or flatter the king or the government; and, in the second place, being consulted yourself about the laws, when you are wise enough, and so helping to make the laws which you have to obey. If you live under fair laws, you are as free as a child or an ignorant person can be; if you live under fair laws which you help to make yourself, you are as free as any one can be. If you break the laws, or have no laws to obey, you are not free at all, but simply foolish or bad, like a savage.

Next, though to know the truth is not easy, to know anything but the truth is impossible; for untrue knowledge is not knowledge at all, but the most mischievous kind of ignorance and nonsense. Now the Greeks took great trouble to know the truth, and really loved it, though they did not always take trouble to tell it. The best of them did take trouble to tell the truth, but on the whole they were not such a truth-telling and promise-keeping people as the Romans.

Lastly, the Egyptians and Persians cared about beauty, and tried to make their chief buildings and monuments and other things beautiful; but they only managed to get a clumsy kind of beauty, not really very beautiful. But the Greeks, after taking a great deal of trouble, learned to make things



TEMPLE OF THESEUS, ATHENS.

far more beautiful, so that nobody now can make more beautiful things than they did. And not only were their great buildings and monuments and statues beautiful, but they came to have the thought of beauty always with them, so that their clothes and lamps and dishes—all the quite

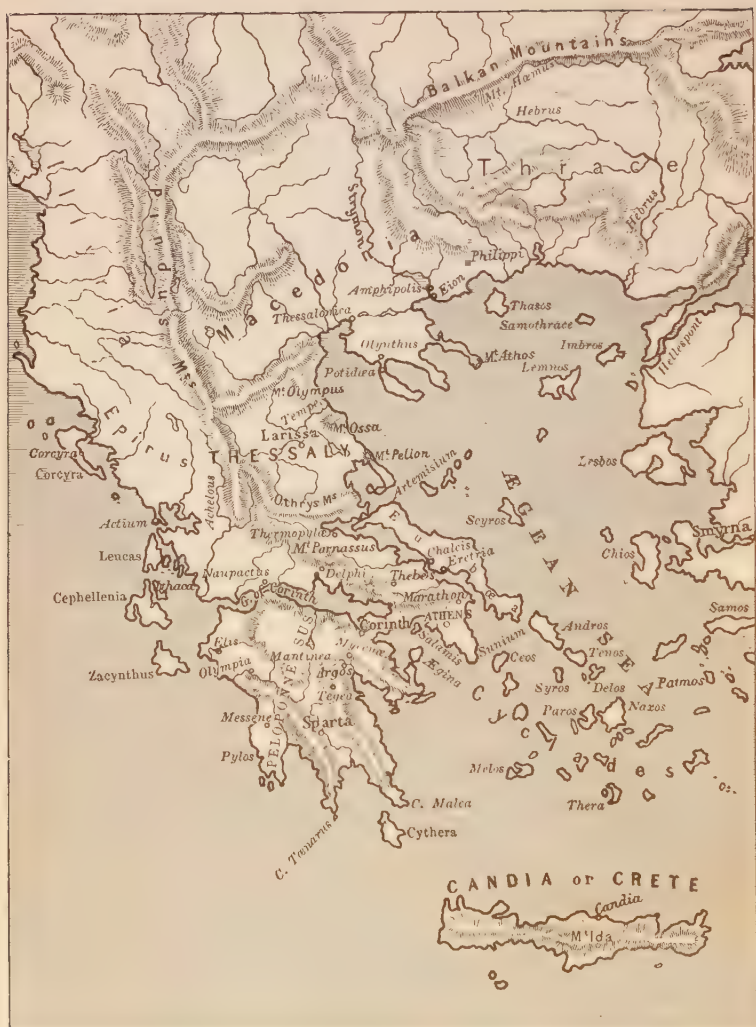
common things that they used every day—were beautiful too. It is hard to explain what beauty is, and how it does us good ; but, for all that, it is certain that it is good, and that it does good. Perhaps you may know a nation that calls itself civilized, and yet does not take as much trouble as it ought to have things beautiful.

What we Owe to Greece.

Because the Greeks loved freedom, they were the beginners of statesmanship, or wise government, in Europe. Because they loved truth, they were the beginners of science, or right knowledge. And because they loved beauty, they were the beginners of art and literature, or the making of things that are good and delightful to see and hear. All these things Europe owes to the Greeks, and that is why it is worth while to read about them. In fact, nearly everything that makes our life better than the life of savages came to us from the Greeks, except three very important things—Christianity, the feeling we have about home, and the art of making and ruling great states. Of these, Christianity, as you know, came from the Jews, though the Greeks, as we shall hear, had something to do even with that. Our feeling about home came mainly from the old Teutonic or German races, whose descendants in the main we are. And the art of making great states and keeping them great came to us partly from the old Romans, and has partly been found out since Western Europe became Christian.

The Map of Greece.

Now take the same map again, and look at Greece, on your left-hand side of the ruler, jutting out into the Mediterranean Sea. You see that it is quite a little country—not nearly so big as France, or Germany, or the British Islands. But Palestine is also a little country, and you know what came to us from there. And Rome was a little country to begin with, though bit by bit, through the courage and



MAP OF GREECE.

wisdom of its people, it grew to be the greatest and strongest and best country in the world. Prussia, too, which is now the head of the great German Empire, was a little country only three hundred years ago. So do not despise Greece for being little, but find the map that shows you ancient Greece by itself, or, still better, Greece and the Greek islands, and the coast of Asia that faces Greece.

No doubt you have learned to read a map, and understand the different marks that the geographers use for mountains and rivers, cities and roads. If not, you had better stop reading this book, and learn to read the map first. For, remember, you cannot learn history without learning geography as well, and the map is just as necessary for history as the history book itself. Now take the scale at the side, and, measuring by that, you will find that from Mount Olympus in the north-east to Cape Tanarus in the south is nearly 250 miles in a straight line—about the same distance as from Edinburgh to Peterborough. And from Actium in the west to Marathon in the east is about 180 miles—much the same as from Edinburgh to Chester. And the whole surface of Greece (which, I daresay, it would puzzle you to measure) is nearly 30,000 square miles—about the same size as the surface of Scotland, if you take in some of the nearer Greek islands, of which we shall speak presently.

Greece compared with Scotland.

In three other ways Greece is like Scotland. First, it has a very rough surface, with many high hills, few plains, and small rivers which run very fast. Next, it has a very broken coast-line, with many long headlands running out and long bays running in. Lastly, it has many islands, great and small, lying off its coast. If you think it over, you will see that these things naturally go together, and that the same unevenness of surface which makes a country mountainous is also likely to give it a broken coast and islands near it—unless it is like Switzerland, and has no

coast at all. For islands and headlands are mountains surrounded by the sea, or sticking out into it, and bays and straits are the valleys or plains between these mountains, filled up or covered by the sea. But in another way Greece is unlike Scotland, for it is much warmer and drier, and, because it is drier, the air is much clearer. Though the hills rise more than twice as high as the hills in the Scottish Highlands, there is little or no snow on them in the summer. And most of the rivers, though in winter and spring they are roaring torrents, dwindle away in the summer till some of them are almost dry. People can grow olives and grapes in the open air in Greece, which we should scarcely think of trying to do in Scotland.

There is one considerable plain in Greece, the plain of Thessaly, to the north-east. You may compare it to Yorkshire, for it is a cup-shaped country, with a rim of high land round it, and nearly all its running water flows out into the sea by one gap in this rim—the Pass of Tempe—just as nearly all the running water of Yorkshire flows out by the Humber. But the mountains of Thessaly are far higher and steeper than the Yorkshire hills. Another smaller plain is Bœotia, to the north-west of Athens.

Famous Places.

Now look at your map again, and let us learn the most famous and important places in ancient Greece. Look at Thessaly, in the north-east, and find the Pass of Tempe, between Mount Olympus and Mount Ossa, with the river Peneus flowing through it to the sea. Look also at the range of Othrys, the southern part of the mountain-rim of Thessaly, and the huge headland of Magnesia, running out into the sea towards the south-east. The countries to the west and south-west of Thessaly, called Epirus, Acarnania, and Ætolia, are not very important, as they were less civilized than other parts of Greece, and contained few cities. South of Thessaly you will see a number of small countries

—Doris, Phocis, two called Locris, and others. You need not remember where all these were. But look carefully for the Pass of Thermopylæ, one of the most famous battle-places in the world, and remember where it lies—on the south side of the Malian Gulf. South of Thermopylæ, and about the middle of Greece, look for Mount Parnassus, and, close beside it, the town of Delphi—both places of renown. North-east of these, look at Artemisium, the north point of the long island of Eubœa. On the south-west side of the same island find the cities of Chalcis and Eretria. Then cross back again to the mainland facing Chalcis, and you will find yourself in the marshy country of Bœotia. In it find Thebes, once a great and powerful city; Plataea, which, though a little town, had a fine, brave people in it; and Leuctra, where a very notable battle was fought. Then you can cross between Mount Parnes and Mount Cithæron into Attica, a three-cornered country containing the city of Athens, the most famous and the most beautiful city of Greece in old times, and now its capital. In Attica look also at Marathon, under Mount Pentelicus, where the Greeks won their first great victory over the Persians, and at Piræus, the harbour town of Athens.

In the Saronic Gulf, the bay to the south-west of Attica, look at the islands of Salamis and Ægina. Then go from Attica towards the Isthmus of Corinth, and first you pass near Megara, then over the isthmus or neck itself—only some four miles wide at the narrowest part—and so at Corinth you enter the southern division of Greece, called Peloponnesus, which has been compared to a hand, or rather to a glove with one finger torn off. South of Corinth, just at the root of the “thumb,” find the ancient city of Argos, with Mycenæ, another ancient city, near by. Then, going south and west, look at Laconia, occupying the next two “fingers” and part of the “back,” with the famous fighting city of Sparta, or Lacedæmon, nearly in the middle of it, between the mountains called Parnon and Taygetus, and on



THE VALE OF TEMPE.

the river Eurotas. The remaining "finger" is Messenia, containing the city of Messene. North of Messenia lie the cities of Pisa and Elis, and, near Pisa, Olympia, where the great games, of which you will hear again, were held. The most northerly strip of land in Peloponnesus, lying along the south side of the Gulf of Corinth, is Achaia; and by a very short voyage from Achaia you could reach Naupactus, a city lying outside Peloponnesus, on the north shore of the narrowest part of the Gulf of Corinth. Lastly, in the very middle of Peloponnesus, on the "back" of the hand or glove, is the highland country of Arcadia, among the mountains of which you should find the cities of Mantinea and Megalopolis.

So far we have only named one or two islands lying close in to the shores of Greece; but the Greeks settled in all the islands of the *Ægean*—now called the Archipelago—so that these islands came to be a part of Greece too. Of these, you should look at Lesbos and Samos, large islands lying near the coast of Asia; and at Paros, and the very small but very sacred island of Delos, near the middle of the *Ægean*. Far to the south you should find the great island of Crete. On the west side of Greece, too, the Greeks occupied the Ionian Islands, Ithaca, Corcyra, and others.

Later on, the Greeks made settlements or colonies in many other places—on the mainland of Asia and of Europe, in the islands of the Mediterranean, and on the coast of Africa. But we need not speak further of these as yet.

Now, if you wish to be able to understand this history, and to read it comfortably, without losing a great deal of time over the map, I advise you to go over all these names two or three times, looking them up each time on the map. If the map is your own, put a red ink dot to mark the position of each town named, and a cross to mark each mountain, so that when you come to them again you can find the places easily and quickly.

Geography and History.

When once you understand the geography of a country, you have begun already to know something of its history. For instance, you see at once that Greece was not an easy country to invade from the north or land side, for from the north-west the invaders would have to pass through very wild and lonely countries, where it would be hard to move an army along, and still harder to feed it; even Thessaly is not very easily entered from the north. There was, in fact, only one fairly easy way into Greece from the land side. This road ran first between Olympus and the sea, then up the Pass of Tempe into Thessaly, then south through open country till it crossed Othrys, and from there it was more or less difficult all the way till you came out into the plain of Bœotia. The worst places of all were the Pass of Tempe, and the still more famous Pass of Thermopylæ. But these places, which were so bad for an invading army, would be, of course, the best places possible to defend. Clearly, only a very daring enemy would attack Greece from the land side, and this is one reason why Greek freedom lasted as long as it did.

On the other hand, Greece has a very long coast-line for such a small country. A nearly square outline, such as that of Spain and Portugal taken together, is, of course, short in proportion to the amount of country it encloses; but an outline something like that of a hand or a star-fish is long for the surface it encloses. If you do not see this, take a square piece of paper and measure all round it with a bit of string. Next cut several pieces out of it—one out of each side will do—so as to make it more like the figure of a star fish or a hand. It is quite clear that the surface of the paper is now smaller; but if you measure round it again—making your string go up into all the gaps you have cut, and not straight across them—you will find that it now takes a longer string to go round this smaller surface. But the

whole outline of Greece, except towards the north, is coast-line, so that plainly Greece has a long coast for so small a country. Now, a long coast-line must plainly be harder to defend than a short one, unless it is the kind of coast that it is scarcely possible to land on, which most part of the Greek coast is not. Therefore it was not so difficult to attack Greece from the sea.

Yet even this long and crooked coast was an advantage as well as a danger, for it gave the Greeks many harbours suitable for trading-ships. And though the rivers are not navigable—that is, suitable for ships—being too small and too swift, the long bays lead right into the heart of the land, so that no part of Greece is very far from the sea, and so goods can be brought by sea almost into the middle of the country. So highly, in fact, did the Greeks value the sea that all the cities they founded in other countries were placed on or near the sea. Even the Spartans, who were very poor seamen, had quite a dread of going many days' march from the coast. The islands, too, helped seafaring in those early days; for, using very small ships, and having no compass, the Greeks dreaded losing sight of land. If there had been no islands, their ships would have had to keep always close to the mainland, which would have made even the voyage to Asia quite a long one.

One other thing the Greek mountains did, besides making the country difficult to invade: they divided it up, so that even near neighbours did not see much of each other. This helped to keep Greece from being united, and is one reason why, small as it is, it contained in ancient times a great number of separate states, and never was a single nation under one government till it was conquered by foreigners.

Lastly, the people who lived in the more mountainous parts, like Arcadia, were always wilder and fiercer, and depended mainly on breeding cattle, much like the Scottish Highlanders two hundred years ago. The people who lived in the open country and nearer the sea were more civilized,

raised better crops, and traded more. The only people who bred horses much, or had any great force of cavalry, were the Thessalians, in the fine grass country to the north-east.

Ol-ymp'us	Æ-to'li-a	Pen-tel'ic-us	Mess-e'ni-a
Tæ'nar-us	Ther-mop'yl-æ	Pi-ræ'us	Mess-e'ne
Ac'ti-um	Ma'li-an	Sar-on'ic	Ol-ymp'i-a
Mar'ath-on	Par-nass'us	Sal'am-is	Nau-pac'tus
Thess'al-y	Ar-tem-is'i-um	Æ-gi'na	Ach-ai'a (<i>ch like k</i>)
Thess-al'i-ans	Eu-bœ'a	Meg'ar-a	Ar-cad'i-a
Tem'pe	Er-et'ri-a	Pel-op-on-ne'sus	Man-tin-e'a
Bœ-o'ti-a	Thebes (<i>one syllable</i>)	My-ce'næ	Meg-al-op'ol-is
Pe-ne'us	Plat-æ'a	Lac-o'ni-a	Æ-ge'an
Mag-ne'si-a	Par'nes	La-ced-æ'mon	Crete (<i>one syllable</i>)
E-pi'rus	Cith-ær'on	Ta-y'get-us	Ith-ac-a
Ac-ar-na'ni-a	Att'ic-a	Eur-o'tas	Cor-cy'ra

CHAPTER II.

WHO THE GREEKS WERE, AND HOW THEY LIVED.

The First Settlers in Europe.

THERE are a great many things which almost every one would like to know, and which nobody does know. One of these is how people first came into Europe, for it is certain that there must have been a time when there were no people in Europe—not even savages. All we know about this is that very long ago—before the beginning of regular history with names and dates—wandering races from Asia found their way into Europe, and bit by bit filled up the better parts of it with people. After this had been going on for a great while—hundreds, or more likely thousands, of years—a new set of wanderers began to reach Europe, wiser and better than those who had settled there before; and these were the forefathers of all the chief nations that are settled in Europe now. Some people of this race stayed in Asia, and their descendants are in India and Persia to this day. But the greatest and most famous nations of this stock are now settled in Europe and America. This ancient race is generally called the “Indo-Germanic” race—not that they called themselves by that name, but it has been invented in modern times for convenience. You must not think, however, that there was one great Indo-Germanic empire, or kingdom, or republic, or that the Indo-Germanic race was like a modern European nation. Not at all; but somewhere in Asia there were a number

of Indo-Germanic tribes, all at first living near one another, speaking the same or nearly the same language, and having the same customs and religion and notions of right and wrong, but without any one king or government to keep them all together. After a time some of these people must have found it difficult to go on living in their own land. Perhaps their neighbours beat them in war, or perhaps their cattle did not thrive, or perhaps, for some other reason, they could not get food enough. Possibly the reason might only be that they had so many children that, as these grew up, the land became over-populated—that is, too full of people. But for one reason or another—and very likely because something caused a want of food—they left their own land and wandered away, with their wives and children and with any cattle or other property that they had, to seek a better country. In some such way as this—travelling, no doubt, very slowly, and often resting for a long time in one place—the different tribes must have come into Europe that were the forefathers of the old Greeks and Romans and Gauls. And from these tribes are descended also the chief modern nations of Europe and America, including even the Russians, who are in many ways so different from the more western nations.

What Language Tells Us.

Perhaps you wonder how this can possibly be known, since we know neither when it was happening, nor by what names the different tribes called themselves at first; nor did they write down any account of their journeyings themselves, for they had not learned to write or read. Well, the chief proof of it is from language. Though such languages as English and French, German and Russian, Latin and Greek, seem at first very different from one another, yet, when you come to study them, you will find that they are alike in many respects, especially in some of those very simple words which are the first words that children

learn to use, and the words most often used by grown-up people too—such as *father, mother, one, two, three*, and so on. Such words as these, though not exactly the same, are more or less alike in all the languages I have named, and in certain Asiatic languages as well, such as the very ancient Indian language called Sanskrit. When people first found this out, they thought that Greek and Latin and all the rest were derived from Sanskrit—that is, grew out of it by natural changes, as French has grown out of Latin. But this turns out to be a mistake. Those old Indo-Germanic tribes, before any of them started on their travels, must have spoken, not Sanskrit, but a very ancient language—or set of languages, all very much alike—which nobody speaks now, and from which all the rest, including Sanskrit, are derived. There is no other likely way of accounting for this curious likeness between the languages we have been speaking of. Therefore it is almost certain that this way of accounting for it is true—that is, that all the chief nations of Europe, as well as some races in Asia, are descended from a set of kindred tribes that lived near one another in Asia thousands of years ago.

We must believe, then, that the Greeks came into Greece in this way three thousand years ago or more, and that they either crossed the sea from the nearer parts of Asia, or else came in from the north-east, through the moderately easy country of Thessaly, and not from the north-west, through the very difficult country of Epirus. Remember, too, that they would not be a mere army of fighting men, but a travelling tribe, or small nation, with their women, children, and cattle—something like the Israelites when they came out of Egypt.

Hellas and the Hellenes.

A curious thing about the Greeks is this, that they did not call themselves Greeks at all. Their name for themselves was Hellenes, and for their land, Hellas. At first, indeed, they had no name for themselves, or none that in-

cluded them all ; but as soon as they began to feel the want of a name by which to distinguish themselves from foreigners, this was the name they hit on, and they have used it, and no other, ever since. If you take an interest in modern Greek stamps or coins, no doubt you know that these are the names they still bear. It was by the Romans that the names *Græcia*, for Hellas, and *Græci*, for Hellenes, were first used ; we have borrowed these names from the Romans, altering them a little to make English of them, and so speak of "Greece" and the "Greeks." How the Romans came to hit on these names we cannot tell, but much the same thing has happened in other cases. For instance, we call the Germans by one name, the French call them by another, quite different, and they call themselves by a third, not in the least like either of the other two.

You must not suppose that when the Greeks or Hellenes settled in Greece they found it quite empty. No doubt there were people there before them ; but either there were not many of them, or, if there were, they were not brave enough, or had not sense enough, to keep the newcomers out. So the Greeks spread over the land, and the people who were there before either died out—as the "Black Fellows" have died out of large parts of Australia—or else became the slaves of the Greeks, and had to work for them, and possibly in some cases their descendants grew so like the Greeks that at last they came to be counted as real Greeks.

City-States.

But though the Greeks, as they settled down and their numbers began to increase, would soon fill up the whole country, they did not put it all under one king or government. Each separate valley in the more hilly parts, and each separate neighbourhood even in the open parts, belonged to a separate tribe, or little nation, which had a king of its own ; and soon each tribe in the lowland parts, as well as some of those in the hills, began to build itself a

city—not a great city, such as London or even such as Edinburgh is now, but a small town fit to hold a few hundred people. Perhaps you may think that we ought rather to call such cities “villages;” but among the Greeks there were two great distinctions between a city or town, however small, and a village, however large. First, each city was a state by itself, with its own separate government; and second, a city had a wall round it for defence. A village did not govern itself, and had no wall.

It is not easy for us now to picture to ourselves one of these little city-states, so small that there were a great many of them, even in a little country like Greece; but for all that, in ancient Greece, and ancient Italy too, all states were small at first. The only big states of very ancient times were kingdoms in Asia, ruled over by kings who could do what they liked. The little states in Europe were the earliest homes of freedom, where the laws could not be changed without all the freemen of the state being consulted, or, at least, being called together and told publicly what the change was to be. In later times, as you know, Rome grew into a great state by mastering the little neighbouring states one by one, and joining them on to itself. But even then the little states went on governing themselves in part, and for ages they were called the “allies”—not the subjects—of Rome, as if they were still separate nations.

No Freedom Formerly in Large States.

And there is a reason why in ancient times no state could be at once very large and also really free. You remember what freedom means—helping to make the laws you have to obey (page 13). Now in a country like the United Kingdom almost every grown man can share that freedom if he likes. For though the laws are made in Westminster, the members of the House of Commons—that is, the most powerful set of our law-makers—are chosen by the voters, or completely free men, living in every part of England, Scotland, Ireland,

and Wales. If these voters wish the laws changed in a particular way, of course they choose members who will try to get this change made. In this way every voter can really help to settle what the laws are to be, though he may never go near the place where the laws are made in his life. This is called "representative government," because the members of the House of Commons are the "representatives" of the whole body of voters—they act for them, that is, and in their name. Simple as this plan seems now, it had to be invented, just as printing had, or the use of steam-power to drive engines; and though representation was invented in very ancient times, it was only about five or six hundred years ago that people began to understand its value. In fact, it had no very great value till travelling became tolerably quick, easy, and safe, for in a large country "representatives" from a long way off would not have been sure of getting to the right place at the right time.

Another thing that prevented big states from being free was that in early times, when there was no printing, and even more in those still earlier times when there was no writing, it was scarcely possible to know much about what was going on at a distance. People only knew what they found out for themselves, or what somebody told them. So the only way they had of letting the people of a state know what change there was going to be in the laws, or of asking them whether they would like a change, was to gather them all into one place, and then set up some one with a very strong voice to tell them all what was to be done, or to ask them all whether they wished it done. Now it would not be possible either to gather all the people together, or to make them all hear what was said, if there were too many of them. So only the small states, with few people in them, could be free—that is, governed by persuasion—in old times; the great states were governed by force. Aristotle, who was one of the wisest of all the Greeks, says that you could not have a state with a hundred thousand citizens or free-

men in it, any more than you could have one with only ten. But we know very well that our own country has millions of people in it, and of these nearly all the grown men are freemen, or citizens, with a right to vote.

Walled Cities.

I have told you that every Greek city, besides governing itself, had a wall for defence. The reason of this was that, as the states were so small and the nearest neighbours were often the bitterest enemies, they needed walls in case of sudden invasion. I daresay you know that most towns in our own country used to have walls round them. At York or Chester you may see the old walls still, and in Edinburgh and some other towns you may see pieces of them. But our towns do not need walls or fortifications now, because our country is so large, and such good order is kept in it, that we have no fear of sudden attacks from our neighbours.

But that I may not mislead you—and, believe me, it is very hard to tell the truth and not mislead people, even if one knows exactly what the truth is—I must tell you that some unlucky city-states lost the power of governing themselves, and even had to pull down their walls, because other cities conquered them and kept them helpless. And one most famous state—Sparta, the foremost fighting power in Greece—never chose to have a wall until it grew weak, for their boast was in Sparta that such brave fighters as they were could do without a wall. Yet even Sparta had to build a wall at last.

Now I am going to name a few of the most famous of these city-states to you, and you should look at them again on the map and learn exactly where they were. First shall come glorious and beautiful Athens, the most interesting of them all, and the one you will hear most about; then Sparta, the warrior state. These two were called the “Eyes of Greece,” though they were not much alike, except that for many years they were the two leading states. Then

ancient Argos, which was great and famous in the very early times of which we know so little, but afterwards was beaten by Sparta, and came to be of less account. Then dull Thebes, where a brave but stupid and wrong-headed people lived, who never did much good till Epaminondas, the greatest soldier and greatest statesman that Greece ever had, arose in their midst to astonish the world. And lastly, rich Corinth, the trading town, standing between the two seas, the only state on the Greek mainland, except Athens, that ever had a powerful fighting fleet.

Government of the City-State.

You will see on the map that each of these cities stands in a district which very often has a name something like that of the city. Argos, for instance, stands in Argolis; Sparta, called also Lacedæmon, in Laconia; and Athens in Attica. In each case all or part of this district belonged to the city and supplied it with food. There the citizens grew their crops and fed their cattle, and there many of them lived themselves in quiet times; but in times of danger they all had to seek safety within the city walls—even those who generally lived outside—and it was by the name of the city, not of the district, that the state was called. Thus we speak of the state of Athens, not Attica, and of all the completely free men living in Attica as Athenian citizens. A large city might rule over a district as big as one of our smaller counties, while a small one would own perhaps only about as much land as one of our parishes. Just as a family is governed by the father, so these ancient little states were governed at first by kings. Each king was looked upon as the head or father of the whole state, which was supposed to have grown out of one family, as perhaps, in some cases, it really had. These kings were supposed to be descended from some god—a strange notion to us, but natural enough to them, for they thought of the gods as very like men, only more powerful. The king was the chief man in every-

thing—chief in war, chief or only judge, chief priest, and manager of the whole state. But, for all that, he could not do just what he liked. Even before there were written laws there were customs or fixed ways of doing things, and if the king broke these customs he angered his people. Besides that, before he could make any change in these customs or unwritten laws, or could do anything else that mattered to the state, he had to talk things over with the nobles or counsellors—usually old men, the heads of the chief families in the state—and after that he had to call together all the freemen and tell them what was going to be done. If he and the counsellors could not agree, or if they agreed to do something the freemen did not like, this, again, would make the freemen angry. You may think that it would not matter much if they were angry, but it did matter a great deal; for who was to make them obey if they did not choose to obey? The king's army was made up of these very freemen; police had not been invented; and so a king who was foolish enough to quarrel with his people would soon find that he was helpless. Here, then, was the beginning of freedom already; and in all small and simple free states it has been the rule, at least to begin with, that all the freemen were fighting men, and all the fighting men were freemen.

Defence of the City-State.

When these fighting men went out to battle, they wore metal armour for defence, and their great weapon was the pike or spear. They had also swords and daggers for close-quarter fighting; and some had javelins and bows, and in later times slings, for fighting at a distance. But the men armed with bows, javelins, or slings—called “light-armed troops,” because they did not wear a full suit of defensive armour—did not count for very much. In the best days of Greece they were poor freemen, or sometimes even slaves; it was the richer citizens in full armour who really decided

the battles. In the earliest times, the chiefs, who rode to battle in war-chariots, were looked on as the strongest part of an army; but it was soon found that the "heavy infantry" —that is, the fully-armed men fighting on foot with pikes—were really the men to trust to. War-chariots were given up; and though the richest men of all usually served on horseback, Greek horse-soldiers seldom did much in a battle. You will easily understand why the richest men served on horseback, the bulk of the fairly rich citizens as heavy-armed infantry, and the poorest as light-armed infantry, if



GREEK SPEARMAN.

(From a Vase.)

you remember that every free citizen had to supply himself with weapons, and, if he was going to fight on horseback, with a horse too. Only the richest could afford horses, the fairly wealthy could afford complete suits of armour, and the poor could only afford to be "light-armed." Nowadays battles are decided almost entirely by shooting; in old Greek battles such shooting as there was went for very little,

and it was the "shove" of the pikemen, as the old writers call it, that usually settled the matter.

Life and Occupations.

In peace time both men and women wore loose clothes, of woollen or linen stuffs, not fitting closely to their arms and legs. When boys or men were engaged in running, jumping, wrestling, or any other active game, they went quite naked, though they would no more have thought of walking about

the streets without being fully dressed than we should now.

Their cattle were much the same as ours now, such as oxen, sheep, and pigs. Oxen were largely used for drawing the plough; but they had also asses and mules, and the richer men bred horses. Watch-dogs were kept to guard the houses, and also hounds for hunting. Their chief crops were corn of different kinds; and they grew vines, and olive and fig trees, besides flax from which to make linen. The olive was of great use to them, for they used its oil in cookery, to burn in their lamps, and to anoint their bodies with; but, for all that, it seems that it was not much grown in Greece in the earliest times. At Athens they had a famous sacred olive tree, of which you will hear again.

Religion.

The Greek religion is not easy for us to understand. Sometimes it seems as if they believed in one great and mighty God, the Father of all, and at other times as if they thought that every wood and mountain, river and sea, was full of gods and goddesses. Sometimes they spoke of "God" and sometimes of "the gods." Perhaps the truth is this, that though most people believed in many different gods, those who thought more about their religion believed that there was only one great God, and that all the other gods of whom people spoke were either less-powerful spirits, or else were different names for the one God.

They told many curious and interesting stories about their gods—about Zeus, the father of gods and men, and Hera, his wife; Phœbus, or Apollo, the sun-god, and his sister, Artemis, who ruled the moon; Ares, the fierce war-god; Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty; and Athena, the wise goddess, who would help those who tried to live reasonable lives, like men and not like beasts. Then there were Nereids, or sea-nymphs; Naiads, or fresh-water nymphs; and a host of others, not so powerful as those I named first.

Strangest of all was Pan, the god of wild nature, who lived in caves and brought sudden fear upon men. From his name comes the word "panic," which we still use for a sudden unreasoning fear that falls on many people at once.



ZEUS AND HERA, IN THE OLD GREEK STYLE.

(From Bas-reliefs in the Capitol, Rome.)

Besides these lesser gods, there were heroes or half-gods; for a hero meant at first not merely a brave man, but one who was supposed to be partly a god, like Achilles, whose mother was a goddess, though his father was a mortal man. As you have heard, their kings were supposed to be descended from gods and heroes.

Nearly all the stories about the Greek gods are interesting, though some of them do not make you love the gods much, but rather hate or despise them, for they tell of base and cruel and wicked things which the gods were supposed to have done. Socrates the Athenian, the best of all the Greeks, tried to teach his countrymen that they ought not to tell or believe such stories as these, for he thought that

men would find excuses for being wicked themselves, if they thought the gods were wicked too.

When the Romans began to learn Greek, they thought that the Greek gods and goddesses were the same as their own, and borrowed the Greek stories about their gods, because their own stories were not nearly so interesting. That is why people sometimes speak of "Zeus or Jupiter," "Aphrodite or Venus," mixing up Greek and Latin names as if they meant just the same. But the religion of the Romans was really very different from that of the Greeks, so that it is better to keep the names apart, and to call the father-god in whom the Greeks believed "Zeus," and the father-god in whom the Romans believed "Jupiter."

More powerful than all the gods, even than Zeus himself, was Fate; but what Fate was nobody could explain, except that Fate made things happen the way they did, and that none could get the better of Fate either by force or by cunning.



ATHENA, IN THE OLD
GREEK STYLE.
(From bas-relief in the
Capitol, Rome.)

Prophets and Oracles.

Like most other people in ancient times, and like savages and ignorant people now, the Greeks believed in curious rules, which seem to us quite absurd, for finding out what was going to happen. There were prophets or seers, whose regular business it was to do this, and they went chiefly by signs taken when beasts were being sacrificed to a god, or by the flight and cries of birds, or by dreams; they were also supposed to be able to tell the meaning of anything very surprising that happened, such as an eclipse of the sun or moon. Another way of foretelling the future was by



VILLAGE OF CASTRI, ON THE SITE OF THE ANCIENT DELPHI, MOUNT PARNASSUS.
(From a Photograph)

going to a place where there was an oracle of some god. These oracles were places of prophecy, and the prophecy itself is also called an oracle. The most famous of all the oracles was Apollo's oracle at Delphi, which was a very sacred place because of the oracle. People from all parts of Greece, and even from other countries, came to ask questions there ; and the answers, which were given by a priestess, were supposed to come, not out of her head, but from the god himself. It is not easy now to understand how they went on believing in such things, for, of course, both seers and oracles often made mistakes ; and once at least it was proved that the priestess at Delphi had given a particular answer because she had been bribed to do so. But no doubt both the seers and the people who managed the oracles took great trouble to give answers that were likely to turn out right, and we know that the oracles often gave answers that might have more meanings than one. Besides this, the Greeks, having once got it well into their heads that they must have some way of finding out what was going to happen, were obliged to keep to the only way they knew of, even if it often worked rather badly ; just as people now will go on employing a man who does not do his work very well, if they cannot find any one to do it better. And in one matter we know that the oracles often gave very good advice. When a Greek city was going to found a colony, or daughter city, the advice of an oracle was always asked ; and we know that many colonies which turned out very successful were founded in places recommended by the oracle of Delphi, which was the one usually consulted on such occasions.

Worship.

The Greeks sacrificed to their gods much as the Romans did to theirs, offering both beasts and other things, such as meal and wine. Of course you know that the Israelites did the same thing. Strange as it seems to us to slaughter beasts as an act of worship, it was a natural enough thing

to do at first, when people thought that the gods were very like men, and that they ate and drank much as men do. Afterwards they offered sacrifices, as a way of showing that they were willing to take trouble and to give what was of value to themselves in order to do the gods honour. The Greeks honoured their gods also with temples, with statues,



SACRIFICE.

(From the Xanthian Marbles.)

and with offerings of many kinds which were hung up in the temples. And, though their own houses were plain enough at first, they seem always to have tried to make the temples and statues of the gods as beautiful as ever they could.

Influence of Religion.

But the part of religion that matters most is not the part which has to do with public worship, but the part which guides men's lives, making them better or worse men all day and every day. Now the Greek religion certainly did something to make the Greeks better men, teaching them to be brave and honest and to help one another. It taught them that a man must not have two wives at once—as people might then and may now in many parts of Asia—and it taught them not to practise the horrid cruelties and treacheries in which many Asiatics did and do see very little harm. Again, it taught them to be proud of being Greeks and proud of their own city, and to try to act so that Greece and their city might be proud of them; for, of course, there is no good

in being proud if it does not make you act honourably. It is a pity that they did not love Greece more, even if they had had to love their own particular cities rather less ; just as it is a pity now when an Englishman or Scotsman or British colonist loves England or Scotland or his own colony better than he loves the great British Empire. But it would not be fair to blame the Greeks for not understanding what they really had not much chance to understand. "Union is strength," but I do not think any ancient Greek ever fully understood the meaning of this saying, except the great Theban Epaminondas, who, to his lasting honour, was blamed for loving Greece better than he loved Thebes.

Slavery.

One very bad thing the Greek religion permitted, and that was slavery. But you will wonder at that the less if you remember that every one in ancient times seems to have thought slavery quite right ; that, in spite of Christianity, our own countrymen held slaves in the West Indies less than a hundred years ago ; and that a great many people still living can remember the time when men of our own race and speaking our own language held slaves in the Southern States of North America. A really strange thing is that not only did the Greeks make slaves of foreigners, as we did once of negroes, but even of their fellow-Greeks, and sometimes of men who had been freemen of their own cities ; but I think they always had a kind of half knowledge that this last was wrong and unnatural. As for foreigners, they despised them all, even when they feared them, and called them "barbarians," though "barbarians" does not now mean to us the same as "foreigners" (page 10). Aristotle says that barbarians were meant by nature to be slaves. Another saying of his will show you how natural it seemed to a Greek to have slaves. "The ox," says he, "is the poor man's slave," as if he rather pitied the poor man for not having a real slave. The Greeks were, on the whole,

less cruel to their slaves than the Romans were to theirs, and no doubt many of their slaves were tolerably happy ; on the other hand, the Romans oftener set their slaves free.

Hell-e'-nes

Ar'-is-tot-le

(ar'-is-tot-l)

Ep-am-i-non'-das

Zeus (*one syllable*)

Art'-em-is

Aph-rod-i'-te

Ath-e'-na

Ner'-e-ids

Nai'-ads

Ach-ill'-es (*ch like k*)

Soc'-rat-es

CHAPTER III.

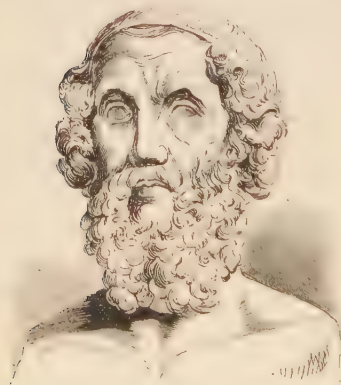
ABOUT THE FAMOUS GREEK STORIES, AND SOME OTHER MATTERS.

The Heroes.

JUST as we do not know exactly how or when the Greeks came into Greece, so we do not know very much about what they did for many years after their first settlement there. We know what kind of people they were, and what kind of life they led; but that is all. These early times, however, of which we cannot give you any exact history, are the very times about which the most famous of the Greek stories are told. In these stories, gods and goddesses, heroes and kings and prophets, and quite ordinary people, all meet and talk together, are friends or enemies, say many wonderful things, and have many wonderful adventures. Of all these stories the most famous is the great Tale of Troy.

I do not know if your map shows Troy, or Ilium; but if ever there was such a place, it stood in the north-west corner of that part of Asia which faces Greece—between Mount Ida and the strait called the Hellespont. The story tells how wicked Paris, a prince of Troy, came over to Greece and stole away Helen, the beautiful wife of the king of Sparta. So Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ, near Argos, and many other Greek kings and princes, all joined together and raised a great army, and sailed over the sea, and fought against Troy for ten years, till at last they took it and burnt

it to the ground. The bravest of all the Greeks was Achilles the Swift-footed; but he quarrelled with Agamemnon, and this quarrel delayed the taking of Troy. Other famous Greeks were the cunning Odysseus, whom the Romans called Ulysses, and the wise old counsellor Nestor, and Aias—called by the Romans Ajax—Diomede, and Patroclus, all valiant men. Of the Trojans the bravest was Hector, the stout-hearted and kind-hearted prince; and as none of the Greeks but Achilles could beat him, Troy would never have been taken if Hector had not killed Patroclus. For



HOMER.

Achilles so loved Patroclus that, when he knew that he was dead, he gave up his quarrel with his own countrymen, and went out to fight again, and killed Hector; then Achilles was slain, and soon after that Troy was taken. Other parts of the story tell of the adventures of the Greek chiefs on their way home from Troy. Two of the very best poems in the world tell about Ach-

illes and the war against Troy, and about Odysseus and his adventures on his way home to Ithaca; they are called the Iliad (that is, the tale of Ilium or Troy), and the Odyssey (that is, the tale of Odysseus). We call these the poems of Homer, but nobody knows who Homer was, nor even whether one man made the whole of the two poems. But this is certain, that, whoever made these poems, no one has ever made a better; and some of the greatest poets of later times and other countries—such as Virgil the Roman, and Milton the Englishman—have put into their own poems many things copied out of the Iliad or the Odyssey. Other notable stories are

those about Heracles the Strong—or Hercules, as the Romans called him—and his twelve great labours; about Jason and his comrades, who sailed in the ship *Argo* to fetch a wonderful golden fleece from Colchis, at the east end of the Black Sea; about Theseus, who slew a monster in Crete, and made all the little states of Attica into the one state of Athens; and about the war of the “Seven against Thebes.” There is not room in this book to tell you all these stories, or even one of them in full, but there are many books in which you can read them for yourself in English.

Whether there ever was a real war against Troy, or such a city as Troy at all, no one can tell for certain, though the ruins of a very ancient city have been discovered in the place where Troy is supposed to have stood, and it is possible that this city was once called Troy, or Ilium, or both. But nobody would now believe the stories of the gods taking sides, and appearing on earth to help the warriors whom they liked, or to frighten or hurt those whom they disliked. Long afterwards, when there were great wars between the Greeks and Asiatics, the Greeks, remembering the Tale of Troy, thought of these later wars as if they were the old quarrel broken out anew.

We call this part of Greek history the “Heroic Age,” because the stories are about gods and heroes, or half-gods, even more than about mere brave or wise men.

The Greeks had many other poems besides Homer’s—including plays which they acted—about the siege of Troy and the other stories of the Heroic Age. And not only is that so, but Roman poets in later ages, and poets of other countries in quite modern times, have gone on telling the old Greek stories over and over in their poems, because nobody can find better stories to tell. Two of our own poets who were living quite lately, Tennyson and Morris, each wrote poetry founded on the old Greek tales, and others of our poets who are still alive have done so too.

Perhaps it seems strange to you that all the famous stories

of this time should have been told in verse, or poetry, and not in prose. One reason for that is that the Greeks had not yet learned to write, or, at any rate, had not learned to write easily, and so they did not write down long stories. As it is much easier to remember verse than prose, stories in verse were remembered; but the stories that nobody had put into verse—if there were any—were soon forgotten. From this you see that poetry is older than books.

Different Races in Greece.

As you have heard, the Greeks at first had no name for themselves that included them all. In Homer's poems they are oftenest called Achaians, and this shows that in early times the Greeks of Mycenæ and other leading cities were of this Achaian race. But when regular history begins, we find the Achaian Greeks only or chiefly in the narrow strip of land called Achaia, in Northern Peloponnesus; and the people of Sparta, Argos, Messene, Corinth, and Megara belong to quite another race of Greeks, called Dorians. These Dorians were believed to have come from the little country called Doris, near the Pass of Thermopylæ; at any rate, they came from the north in very ancient times, conquered the Achaians of the south, and ruled over them or drove them away. A third race of Greeks, the Ionians, were chiefly settled, in historical times, in the Greek cities on the east side of the Ægean Sea—that is, on the coast of Asia. You must not confuse these Ionian cities with the "Ionian" Islands, lying to the west of Greece; for the one English word "Ionian" stands for two different words with different meanings in Greek. And a fourth race, or set of races, was the Æolian, to which the Thebans and many others, settled in different parts of Greece, were supposed to belong. In fact, if a Greek was not an Ionian, or a Dorian, or an Achaian, he was considered to be an Æolian—unless, indeed, he was an Athenian; for the Athenians were supposed to be a kind of half Ionians, although the Greek they

spoke in Athens was not the same as was spoken in the Ionian cities.

These four races, then—Achaïans, in Northern Peloponnesus; Dorians, occupying most of the other parts of Peloponnesus; Ionians, living chiefly east of the Ægean Sea; and Æolians, scattered over many parts of Greece—together made up the people of the Hellenes, or Greeks. They all used nearly the same language, though you could tell a Theban from an Athenian, or a Spartan from either, by their different ways of speaking. They all had the same religion, worshipped the same gods, and consulted the same oracles. They were all proud of being Greeks, and despised foreigners or “barbarians.” And every Greek more or less looked on every other Greek as his countryman, though the different states often went to war with one another.

Two Other Bonds of Union.

Two other things did something to keep the Greeks together. One was the famous but feeble Amphictyonic Council; this was a body of “representatives” (p. 30), or deputies, chosen from twelve very ancient Greek tribes, which met twice a year. As they were chosen by other people to talk things over for them, and as they consulted together about the affairs of Greece, you might think that this was a case of “representative government.” So it would have been, if they had really governed; but having neither army nor fleet, and no money to pay for either, they could not really govern, for they could not make people obey them. They consulted together and advised, and sometimes their advice was taken and sometimes not. The Greeks always professed a great respect for the council, but did not always do what it wished.

The other thing that kept the Greeks together was the fact that from every part of Greece people met at certain fixed times to worship the gods, and to hold public games at particular places. Their religion was a very cheerful and



RUINS AT OLYMPIA.

even a merry one, and they looked upon holding races and wrestling matches, and even upon going to the theatre, as religious acts, highly pleasing to the joyful gods. The greatest of these games were the Olympic games, held every four years at Olympia, near Pisa. They were in honour of Zeus, and were considered so sacred that it was a sin for Greeks to attack one another, or do any act of war among themselves, while the games were going on. They were very ancient—how ancient nobody could tell—and the chief event in them was the chariot race. The man whose chariot won—not the driver, but the owner—was treated with great honour, and looked upon as having done something very



CHARIOT-RACING, OLYMPIC GAMES.

(Panofka's *Bilder Antiken Lebens*.)

glorious for his city, though the prize that was given to him was only a wreath of green leaves. People came to the games from very long distances, but no "barbarian" was allowed to take part in them. There were three other principal race meetings, but none of them of the same importance as the Olympic games.

A curious sign of the interest the Greeks took in these games is this, that one way they had of giving dates—that is, saying when anything happened—was by saying that it was in such a year of such an Olympiad. Now an Olympiad meant a space of four years from one meeting for the Olympic games to the next. They reckoned the first Olympiad from what we call the year 776 before Christ, and the second, of course, would begin four years later, in 772 B.C.,

although the Olympic games had been going on for years before 776 B.C.

But as neither this way of counting by Olympiads, nor any of the other ways used by the Greeks themselves, are very convenient to us now, we reckon ancient Greek dates, and ancient Roman dates too, by saying that a thing happened so many years before Christ, or, written shortly, B.C.—meaning, before the supposed year of Christ's birth. As the ancient Greeks and Romans did not know Christ was going to be born, of course they could not count in this way themselves. You should remember in learning these ancient dates, reckoned before Christ, that they go backwards, and not forwards as our dates do now—that is to say, the year 480 B.C. is one year earlier than 479 B.C.; while, of course, as we count now, the year 1898 is one year later than 1897. You can easily understand this by thinking of the clock. “Twenty minutes to nine” is earlier than “fifteen minutes to nine”—that is like the dates B.C.; but “twenty minutes past nine” is later than “fifteen minutes past nine” that is like our dates now. You will find only a few dates in this book, but I hope you will learn them all, as history without dates is merely a confused set of stories, of very little good to any one.

I'li-um	Od'yss-ey	Pat-roc'lus	The'seus (<i>two</i>
Hell'es-pont	Ul-yss'es	Her'ac-les	<i>syllables</i>)
Ag-a-mem'non	Di'o-mede (<i>three</i>	Her'cu-les	Am-phic-ty-on'ic
Od-yss'eus	<i>syllables</i>)	Col-chis (<i>ch like k</i>)	

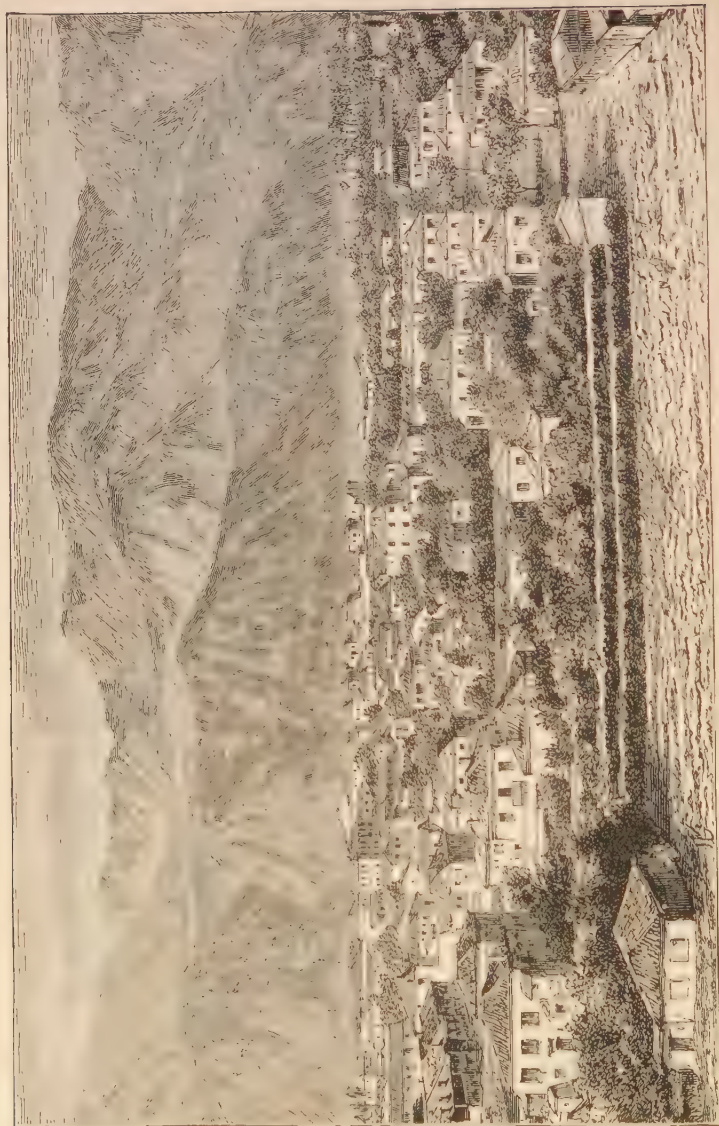
CHAPTER IV.

SPARTA.

The Dorian Invasion.

YOU have heard that the warlike Dorians, coming from the north, conquered the Achæians and other Greeks of Peloponnesus, and took all the best part of that country for themselves. The story they told about this conquest was that the sons—that is, the descendants—of Heracles the Strong, who had been living in the north in a kind of banishment, led these Dorians, and so won back the land which belonged of right to their family. For this reason the Dorian conquest of the south is often called “The Return of the Sons of Heracles.” It seems that they did not march in by way of the isthmus, but crossed in ships from Naupactus, farther west; but we really know very little about how this conquest was carried out.

We do know, however—and I am sure you will be glad to come to something that is known for certain—that of all these new Dorian states Sparta became the strongest in war. There had been a city of Sparta long before the Dorians came from the north, but it was the new Dorian Spartans who made their city the foremost fighting power in Greece. A very strange thing about these Dorian Spartans is that they always had two kings at once, descended, as they supposed, from twin brothers of the family of Heracles. I do not think we should expect such an arrangement to work very well; and, in fact, Sparta was, at first, not the strongest



MODERN SPARTA, ON THE SITE OF THE ANCIENT CITY.

but the weakest of the new Dorian states, unable even to conquer the neighbouring town of Amyclæ, and full of every kind of disorder and trouble, because the laws were bad and nobody obeyed them. Even afterwards, when Sparta had grown strong, the kings seem to have been enemies much oftener than friends; but this was supposed to be rather a good thing, since, as long as they were quarrelling with one another, they could not be acting together to oppress the state.

Lycurgus and his Work.

This time of trouble and weakness at Sparta was ended by the great lawgiver Lycurgus, who made laws so good and wise that Sparta grew orderly and strong, and for hundreds of years kept the same laws without any revolution, or any great change in the way the state was ruled. This at least is the story the Spartans told themselves. All their strange laws and customs, which made them so different from other Greeks, they spoke of as Lycurgus's laws. But it is more likely that, though Lycurgus began the great changes which first made Sparta strong, other changes were really made after his time. At any rate, the Spartans undoubtedly did become the best fighting men in Greece, and long continued so; and the other Greeks, even when they hated them, could not help admiring them; for strength and courage are shining qualities, and success in war will always be admired. Still, we should scarcely consider such a state as Sparta—where they were very good at war, and not good at all at anything else—as a really fine or really civilized state. War is often necessary, but it is always hateful and mischievous; and it is when they are at war that civilized nations are most like savages.

Even when we come to Lycurgus we have hardly reached the beginning of regular history. No doubt there was such a man, but you must look on what is told you about him rather as a story than as a thing certainly known. He belonged, says the story, to one of the two royal families, and

might have become king himself, if he had been a wicked man, by murdering his little nephew, the lawful king, who was in his power. But instead of doing this he went away from Sparta and travelled into many countries far beyond Greece, so that when he came home he knew the laws of many lands. Then, as the trouble and disorder were still going on in Sparta, the people at last begged Lycurgus to make new laws for them, and try to settle things in a better way.

The Rulers of Sparta.

Lycurgus appointed that the two kings were not to rule as they pleased, but were to consult with the Senate, or



LYCURGUS.

(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

Council of Elders, in all matters that concerned the state; and after that the freemen were all to come together, hear what had been arranged, and, without waiting to talk it over, say at once whether they agreed to it or not. This does not seem very different—except for the two kings—from the old way in which all Greek states were ruled at first (p. 32). But evidently at Sparta the kings and the

nobles or counsellors had not been able to agree, and so Lycurgus settled that, instead of all the nobles being counsellors, twenty-eight were to be chosen, all old men over sixty, and these with the two kings made up the new Senate, or Council of Thirty. At first, no doubt, this council must have had nearly all the power, for the freemen could only say “yes” or “no” to what the council proposed. It would be of no use for the council to make proposals that did not sound reasonable; but it is not likely that the freemen would often say “no” to anything that seemed like a change for the better.

But afterwards—most likely not till Lycurgus had been long dead—a new kind of rulers were set up, called “ephors,” or overseers, and, though at first they only shared the power with the kings and counsellors, bit by bit they drew nearly all the power to themselves, till the kings, who were still treated with a great deal of honour, had little real power left, and the counsellors still less. There were five of these ephors, and they were chosen every year in a way which Aristotle says was “very childish.” What this way was we do not know. The whole body of freemen was supposed to choose them, but perhaps the “childish” way of choosing was really arranged on purpose, so that the ephors of one year could settle who should be ephors the next year, while the citizens supposed that they were choosing freely—just as a conjurer will make you think you are choosing a card freely, when really he forces you to take the particular card that suits his trick.

Spartan Training.

But the most remarkable and important of Lycurgus's laws had to do not with kings or counsellors, ephors or assemblies, but with the daily life of all the Spartan citizens. Now you should understand that not only the Spartans, but the other Greeks, and the Romans too, thought more about the state, and less about this or that man, than we do now. We do very little for the state, except paying taxes; and few of us do that without grumbling. They considered that the state had a right to ask from its citizens far more than this—in fact, that the citizen was there for the sake of the state, and not the state for the sake of the citizen. Now there were only a very few Spartan citizens—most likely never more than about ten thousand fit to bear arms, which was not a large number even for one of these little ancient city-states. So Lycurgus determined to make up for the small number of the citizens by so training them that they should be the bravest and most skilful soldiers in Greece.

He therefore turned Sparta into a kind of camp, in which nothing was to be considered but how to make every citizen into a good soldier, so that Sparta might always win in war. The life of a soldier has to be hard and rough even in peace time, as a training for the hardness and roughness of war ; and the life of the Spartans henceforward was made very hard and rough indeed. As soon as a boy-baby was born, the first question was whether he was strong and healthy ; and if not—no matter how much his father or mother might wish to keep him alive—he was taken from them by order of the state and left on the hillside to die. At seven years old the little boys were taken from their mothers to be brought up in a state school. Here they did not learn reading, writing, arithmetic, or anything of that kind, but to run and wrestle and jump, and to bear pain without flinching ; for the state wished to make strong and brave soldiers of them, and did not care how little book-learning they had. So they were treated very severely, had scarcely enough food to eat, and had to wear the same clothes in summer and winter, and, generally speaking, everything was done to teach them to think that discomfort and pain did not matter. They might add to their food, if they could, by hunting and even by stealing ; but if a boy was caught stealing, he was severely punished, not for being a thief, but for being caught. All this was to make them hardy and cunning and able to shift for themselves, and no doubt a soldier has to be all this. But the very same training also made them brutal and dishonest, and these are bad qualities for a soldier or any one else. Only two things in this training did anything to keep them from being utterly brutal. They were taught to be obedient and respectful to older people, and to practise singing together. Even these things were chiefly done with a view to improving them as soldiers ; for obedience is the most necessary of all qualities in a soldier, and choir-singing is a kind of drill, and teaches people to act together, as soldiers have to act.

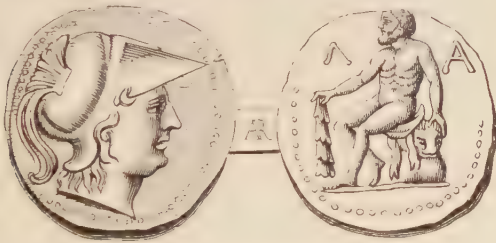
As he grew up the Spartan boy began to learn his regular drill, and at twenty he became a soldier. These young soldiers, or recruits, were not at first sent far from home or into great danger; but at thirty, when a Spartan had to marry—for the state settled that matter for him too—he was considered to be fully grown up, fit to attend the Assembly of Citizens, and to go on the most distant and dangerous service. When a young man left school he did not go home, but to barracks, where he lived with other soldiers like himself. And even when he married he was not at first allowed to live with his wife. When at last this was allowed, he still had to dine at the mess or soldiers' public table, where the food was very plain and rough; and up to the age of sixty he had to go on doing this, and might be sent off to fight at any time. It was only at sixty that a man could settle down to live quietly in his own home. Thus a Spartan citizen gave almost his whole life to the state; and, as he had no time to earn his living, every citizen had to own land, and live on what the land produced. This caused a great deal of trouble at Sparta; for if a citizen, with just enough land to make a living for one family, had three sons, how were they and their families to be provided for, when they grew up and married?

The Spartan women were freer than the Spartan men, and freer than the women of other parts of Greece. Most Greeks treated their women as a kind of fools, who were never to be trusted, but always to be kept out of the way and told what was good for them. The Spartans, at all events, were wiser than this: their girls were put through the same kind of training as the boys, to make them hardy and strong. But they were allowed to live at home with their mothers till they married; and then, as soon as their husbands were allowed to set up house, the management of the new home was left almost entirely to the wife, for the husband was hardly ever there. As you may suppose, this rough training made them strong, fine-looking women; but it also



THE VALLEY OF SPARTA AT THE PRESENT DAY.

made their manners rough, and having the management of their homes was apt to make them very fond of money. This was the more unfortunate because, as you have heard, a Spartan citizen had no time to be earning money in honest ways—he was too busy with his duties as a soldier; and so, as Spartans usually cared a great deal for their wives, many of them were only too ready to earn money in dishonest ways. As you read Greek history, it sometimes seems as if every Spartan, from the kings downwards, was always on the lookout for a bribe; at any rate, they often suspected and accused one another of taking bribes.



COIN OF LACEDÆMON.
(*Hunterian Museum.*)

As the Spartans spent more time over their drill than any other Greeks—in fact, they spent nearly their whole time thus—they naturally became very good at it. Even when a Spartan army was taken by surprise, or had fallen into disorder, every man knew where he ought to be, and would very soon get into his place again. This helped them to win battles even more perhaps than their courage did, though they really were braver than other Greeks; and everything was done that could be done to keep them braver, by honouring those who showed courage, and by putting all kinds of shame on a coward. When a young Spartan went to war, his mother gave him his shield and said, “Come back with it, or come back on it.” If a man was frightened in a battle and started to run away, the first thing he would do

would be to throw down his heavy shield, that he might run the faster. But a Spartan was either to march home, like a brave man, with his shield slung at his shoulder, or to be carried home, like a brave man, dead or disabled, on his shield. To come home without his shield meant coming home to misery and disgrace. The Spartans even tried to make war pleasant for their men, as far as such a thing is possible, by encouraging them to make themselves as tidy and smart as they could before a battle, as if it was a kind of feast or pleasure party; and also, if there was time, to go in for races and other active games, which were not only good practice for war, but were their chief kind of amusement. "Everything was done," says the writer of an excellent modern history of ancient Greece, "to make the Spartans look on war time as a relief from the horrors of peace."

Spartan Conquests.

Under these terrible but useful laws the Spartans soon grew strong in war, took Amyclæ, beat the Arcadians, beat the people of Argos, and took from them the land that lay between Laconia and the sea to the east, and in two great wars conquered their western neighbours, the Messenians, and became masters of all Messenia to the sea on the west. Many stories are told about these Messenian wars, some of them clearly not true; but the only one you need remember is this. An oracle told the Spartans to ask help of the Athenians; the Athenians, who were not very friendly to the Spartans just then, but did not like to treat the oracle with open disrespect, sent the Spartans a lame schoolmaster, thinking that the help he could give would not come to much. But this man, whose name was Tyrtaeus, turned out to be a poet, and he made such splendid war-songs for the Spartans that their courage grew hotter than ever, and they made short work of the Messenians. For this reason we still call a man who makes a good war-song a "Tyrtaeus." It is more likely, however, that Tyrtaeus was really a Spartan.

All these conquests brought under the rule of Sparta a great many people who were not Spartan citizens. There were two sets of these—the half-free, who were not so very badly off, and the unfree, who were terribly ill used. The half-free, called by a name which means “dwellers in the neighbourhood,” had nothing to do with settling the laws of Sparta, or deciding whether there should be peace or war. In fact, they had to obey a government in which they had themselves no share, and to keep laws which they had not helped to make (p. 13). On the other hand, they had not to go through the terrible training provided for the Spartan citizens, and they had leisure to trade; they were, in fact, the only traders in Laconia, for the Spartan citizens, as you have heard, had no time for trade. In war time they fought for Sparta as heavy-armed infantry, just as the full citizens did, but they were not considered such good soldiers. This, as you see, was an exception to the rule that in a free state the fully armed fighting men and the fully free men were the same.

The Helots.

The unfree—called “Helots,” a name of which the meaning is doubtful—were far worse off: they were descended from the Messenians and other conquered races, and were a kind of slaves, living on the land belonging to Spartan citizens, and cultivating it for their masters, or else employed as slaves in Sparta itself. In war time they followed their masters as servants, and even served as “light-armed” troops. As the Spartans used them both scornfully and cruelly, it seems as if it must have been a dangerous thing to arm them as soldiers; but these light-armed soldiers, with little or no defensive armour, never could stand up to heavy-armed men in a close fight. There are



LIGHT-ARMED GREEK
SOLDIER.

(Panofka's *Bilder Antiken Lebens*.)

dreadful accounts of how badly the Spartans treated their helots, forcing them to get drunk, that the citizen-boys might learn to look on drunkenness as a filthy thing, disgraceful to a free man—which was a very good thing to teach them, but a very bad way of teaching it—and murdering in secret any helot who became a leader among his fellows. It is true that they did sometimes use some of them as heavy-armed soldiers, and even set them free, as a reward for good service; but it was not always safe for the poor helots to distinguish themselves even in fighting for Sparta. Thucydides tells how once, in the great Peloponnesian war between Sparta and Athens, the Spartans thought the helots meant to rebel, so they chose out two thousand who had done best in the war, and were therefore likeliest to be dangerous in a rebellion, set them free, feasted them, and then had every one of them secretly murdered. This is such a shocking story that people have tried not to believe it; but Thucydides, who was a very good and fair historian, says it happened in his own time.

General View.

So you see what Sparta was— a very powerful and war-like state, but one whose power rested in part on sheer violence and cruelty. They used their helots so harshly that they were always afraid they would rebel; and so they did, as you will hear. And though they made themselves the chief state in Peloponnesus, and even, for a while, in all Greece, they never were complete masters even of their own business of fighting. For not only were they very poor at sea fighting, but even on land they never could learn “wall-fighting,” as the Greeks called it—that is, the way to take fortified places. Not strong fortifications alone, but even the most ordinary kind of wall or fence, generally served to stop the Spartans. As they certainly did not want for courage, we can only suppose that they were stupid, which is just what, from their training, one would expect. They

also believed in oracles even more than the other Greeks did, and had still more tiresome rules about lucky and unlucky signs; and this too looks as if they were stupider than most Greeks were.

Still, you must not suppose that it was merely their stupidity and brutality that made them so successful. On the whole, it is the good qualities of men and nations, not the bad ones, that make them strong, though sometimes the two kinds of qualities seem to be mixed together in a very puzzling way. The Spartans were at least brave, nearly all of them, and some were very fine fellows. I will name three of these whom you will hear of again—Leonidas, Brasidas, and Gylippus.

Am-y'-clæ
Lyc-urg'-us

Tyr-tæ'-us
Thu-cyd'id-es

Le-on'id-as
Bras'id-as

Gy-lipp'-us

CHAPTER V.

THE AGE OF THE TYRANTS, AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF ATHENS.

Rule of the Nobles.

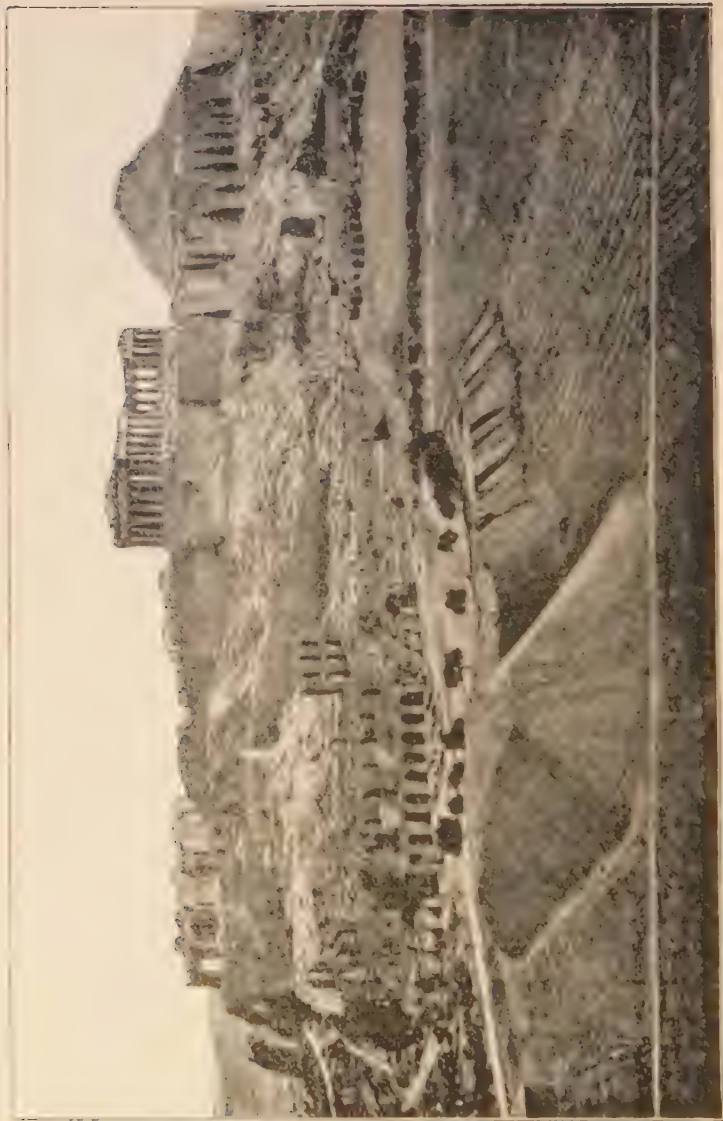
YOU know that language is always changing as long as it is in use. Neither in London nor in Edinburgh do people speak now exactly as they did even a hundred years ago ; and if you could go back farther, to the time when the English translation of the Bible was made, you would find a far greater difference. It is the same with laws : they may change much or little, fast or slowly ; but as long as they are “living” laws, really governing men’s lives, they are sure to change from time to time, just as “living” languages do. The Spartans, as we have seen, made great changes in their laws, and, as they themselves believed, these great changes were made suddenly, and then for hundreds of years they went on with very little change. Perhaps, as you have heard, the great changes in the Spartan laws were not really made all at once. At any rate, in other Greek states the changes seem to have been made step by step, and in most of them they began in much the same way as they did in Rome. Just as the Romans got rid of their kings and set up a government in which most of the power belonged to the nobles, so it happened in most of the states of Greece.

Now, it is not easy to say what is meant by “nobles.” The nobles are the people who have more power, or importance, or dignity than ordinary people ; and, for the most

part, this position of advantage has belonged to them from birth. They ought, no doubt, to be truly noble in their lives, and to set an example to others; very often, however, they do no such thing, but just use their power selfishly. This is what they mostly did in Greece, trying to take from the other people, who were still called free, the reality of freedom—that is, the right of settling in some degree what laws they were to obey and how they were to be governed. But with people like the Greeks, who had had a certain degree of freedom under their kings, and who really cared for freedom, this was pretty sure to lead to trouble; and so it did, but not perhaps quite in the way one might expect.

Rise of the Tyrants.

The people did not at once rise, and, trusting to their numbers, crush the nobles. This sounds easy, but it is really very difficult. They waited till they found a leader—very likely himself one of the nobles; and then this leader, after putting down the nobles with the help of the people, commonly set himself up as king over them both. It seems strange that, not in one city, but in many, the people should have walked straight into such a simple trap as this; but the thing happened over and over again in different cities of Greece between 700 and 500 years before Christ. A man who made himself king in this way, without any right to be king, was called among the Greeks by a name from which comes our word “tyrant:” therefore, in reading Greek history, you should remember that a “tyrant” means, not necessarily a cruel ruler—though many of them were cruel—but a usurper, a ruler who has no right to rule. And we call this time, between 700 and 500 B.C., the “Age of the Tyrants,” because, except Sparta, there was scarcely any state in Greece that did not fall under the power of some tyrant or usurper at some time or other within these two centuries. The nobles, of course, hated the tyrants, and the people, though at first they might think anything better than



THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS AT THE PRESENT DAY.

the selfish rule of the nobles, often found that the leader who had made them great promises forgot them all when once he was tyrant, and ruled badly and cruelly ; or, if the first tyrant was not so bad, very likely his son would be an oppressor. But, as the tyrants hired strangers to serve them as soldiers, and thus kept down the citizens, who ought to have been the only soldiers in their own state, it was much easier to talk about putting them down than to do it. Sometimes the first tyrant was also the last, sometimes he handed on his power to his son and even to his grandson ; but sooner or later all the cities got rid of their tyrants, often with the help of the Spartans, who were the declared enemies of these usurping rulers. Still, you must not think that the tyrants did nothing but harm ; they stopped the strife between nobles and common people, and very likely the common people were better off under the worst tyrants than they had been under the nobles. If the tyrants had done no good, it is not likely that there would ever have been a time when they were to be found reigning in many different cities at once. The Age of the Tyrants came to an end in old Greece about the year 500 B.C., though there were tyrants much later than this in many of the newer Greek cities beyond seas. I think the worst of all these Greek tyrants was Periander of Corinth ; you can read about him, if you like to hear about wicked people, when you grow older. I would rather tell you about Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens, who was one of the best of them. But before we get to him you must hear about Solon, who was not a tyrant at all.

The Legend of Athena.

Of all the stories the Athenians told about the beginning of their city, the most famous was this. There was a dispute between Athena, the goddess of wisdom, and Posidon, the god of the sea, which was to have the honour of being the new city's patron ; and it was settled that they should try which could make the most valuable thing by way of a gift

to the new city, and the one that gave the best gift was to be patron. So Posidon made a horse (the first horse that ever was), and Athena made an olive tree (the first olive tree that ever was); and as, according to Greek notions, an olive tree was far more useful even than a horse, Athena became the patroness of the new city, and called it Athens, after her own name. Ages afterwards, the Athenians showed a sacred olive tree in their citadel—the strong place, that is, on a rock within their city—and this, they said, was the very tree Athena had made. I daresay you remember that there was a sacred tree at Rome too; but that was a fig tree, and they told quite a different story about it. Another tale was that Theseus founded the city-state of Athens by making all the very small cities, scattered up and down Attica, into one state.

At any rate, it seems that Athens was not one of the most ancient states of Greece, nor yet one of the first to become important—not so ancient, nor in early times so important, as Argos or Sparta. But in later times it was so much the most important of them all that what we call the history of Greece is really in the main the history of Athens; and when people learn Greek now, they usually begin by learning Attic Greek—that is the kind of Greek spoken and written in Attica and Athens.

Athens a Kingdom.

Like other Greek states, Athens was ruled at first by a king. The last of these kings was Codrus, who, when the Dorians invaded Attica, got himself killed on purpose, because an oracle had declared that Athens must either lose her king or be conquered. After this, according to the story, the Athenians thought no one else worthy of the noble name of king, so they called their rulers “archons.” This word “archon,” like our word “regent,” simply means “man who rules.” But in time they lessened the power of the archons in two ways --by shortening the time for which they held

their power, and by having more than one archon at once, till at length the archons only held their power for one year, and there were nine who shared this yearly power between them. And there was still a council of the nobles, whom the archons had to consult, and an assembly of the citizens, to whom they had to announce any changes that they meant to make in the laws, just as there had been under the kings. In other words, the same change took place at Athens as in most other Greek states or in Rome—from the rule of a king, called “monarchy,” to the rule of the nobles (that is, of a few only of the citizens), called “oligarchy.”

Athens an Oligarchy.

And this is a good place to explain the three words monarchy, oligarchy, democracy. Monarchy means the rule of one person, oftenest called a king; oligarchy means the rule of a few, often called the nobles; democracy means the rule of the many. An oligarchy is sometimes called also an aristocracy, which means the rule of the best; now and then an oligarchy has really deserved this name, but I do not think many oligarchies have. So you may say, if you please, that the change we have been speaking of at Athens was a change from monarchy to oligarchy or aristocracy. But you should observe that a real or “pure” monarchy only arose in Greece when a tyrant set himself up; for in the old kingdoms the nobles, or the few, and even the people, or the many, had some power. “Pure” monarchy is not very common, and I do not believe the world would be at all a better place if it were commoner. In fact, these names are only names for convenience, and very often they do not exactly fit, and we have to say that a country is under a “mixed government.” Our own country, for instance, is under a mixed government: for the Queen, who is one person, and the peers, who are few, and the whole body of voters, who are many, share the power between them; and many people think a mixed government the best kind of

government a country can have. Certainly Athens did not find oligarchy a very good kind of government. There, as elsewhere, the nobles were both stupid and selfish, and so troubles arose between the rich, who were mostly nobles, and the poor, who were not.

Rich and Poor.

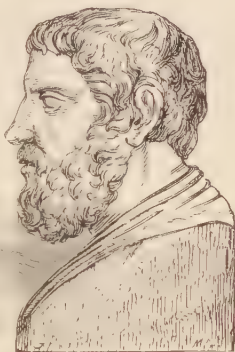
Trouble between rich and poor among ourselves is oftenest about wages, and leads to strikes and lockouts, of which no doubt you have heard ; among ancient Greeks or Romans trouble between rich and poor most often had to do with the ownership of land, or with money-lending. The reason of this is that there was no large class of men earning wages by the day or the week, since most of the work done by such people among ourselves was done among them by slaves. Their poor freemen mostly owned small pieces of land or carried on small trades. Another difference between them and us is that we can borrow money very cheaply, paying only a little interest for the use of it, while among them money was scarce, and a borrower had to pay a great deal of interest even for a small loan. With us, people who are getting on very well are often using borrowed money ; but with them a man who began to borrow could very seldom get clear of debt again, for it was hardly possible to make the borrowed money bring in enough even to pay the interest. So a man did not borrow if he could possibly help it ; and if once a bad harvest or some misfortune in trade forced him to borrow, the end of it generally was that he could not pay back the loan, and so his goods and his land, if he had any, went to the lender. Much the same thing still goes on in the poor countries of Eastern Europe. But in one way a debtor in ancient Athens or ancient Rome was even worse off than a debtor in Russia now : if, when the lender had taken his goods and his land, there was still something more to pay, he could take the debtor himself and use him or sell him for a slave. Cruel as this law was, it was, of course, quite

natural in any country where men could be bought and sold ; and the Romans in early times had just the same law as the Athenians—the debtor had to give up everything he had that had money value, and this, of course, in a slave-holding country, included himself. So the trouble in Attica was that the poorer freemen kept losing their land, till it seemed as if nearly all the land would soon be owned by a few rich men ; and, what was still worse, many poor freemen became slaves, and so the number of Athenian citizens was growing smaller.

Solon.

In this bad state of things the people of Athens called on Solon to try to mend their laws, much as the people of Sparta had called on Lycurgus to try to mend theirs. They had tried mending them once before, but Draco, the man they trusted on that occasion, made the mistake of fixing such very severe punishments for all people who broke the laws that it was said that his laws were “written in blood.”

Solon was a wiser man. Though he was a noble, his family was not very rich ; so he had turned merchant, and



SOLON.

(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

travelled into foreign lands, and had seen, like Lycurgus, in what ways foreign laws were better or worse than those of his own country. He first became famous when there was war between Athens and Megara, and the people of Megara took the island of Salamis. The Athenians, after trying many times to get it back, gave up in despair, and actually made a law that no one, on pain of death, was to try to start another attempt to win the island back. But Solon pretended to be

mad, and stirred the people up to such a pitch of anger about the loss of Salamis that they made one try more, and this time drove out the people of Megara and become masters of their own again. So when they saw that Solon was both a brave and a wise man—for most people can see that a man is brave and wise when he has succeeded, even if, before, they tried to hinder his success—they asked him to see what he could do to end the debt trouble and the land trouble by mending their laws.

A New Coinage.

Now Solon gave Athens quite a new constitution—that is, he did not merely change particular laws, but greatly altered the way in which the state was governed, besides changing the law of debt. Under Solon's new laws no one was to be made a slave because he could not pay his debts; lenders were not to charge as much interest as they liked, but the charges they might make were fixed by law; and the state for this once let off all those who owed to the government money that they could not pay. Besides this, citizens who had become slaves through falling into debt were set free again. Another change that he made needs rather a longer explanation. The Greek coin that was most



COIN OF ATHENS.
(*Hunterian Museum.*)

in use was a silver piece, called a drachm; but in some states they used a heavier drachm, like a shilling, and in others a

lighter drachm, like a French franc. You could buy a great deal more with a heavy or light drachm than you can now with a shilling or a franc, because, generally speaking, money in ancient times went farther than it does now. But the heavy drachm had about as much silver in it as a shilling, and the light about as much as a franc—that is, the light drachm was worth about three-quarters of the heavy. Now in Athens they had always used the heavy drachm, called the “Æginetan,” as they did in Peloponnesus, while Chalcis and other towns lying oversea from Athens used the light or “Euboic” drachm. Solon had all the heavy drachms brought to the mint, melted down, and coined again into light drachms, so that a man who had sent in three hundred heavy pieces got back about four hundred light pieces called by the same name. This change in the coinage had a lasting and very good effect on Athenian trade. It is easier to trade with people who use the same money as you do, and so the Athenians began to trade more with the oversea towns, which used the light coinage, and less with the towns in Peloponnesus, which went on using the heavy. This made them use ships more, and so they soon had a large merchant fleet; and afterwards, like other nations that trade much by sea, they began to have a strong fighting fleet as well. But the first result that followed from Solon’s laws was that many citizens who had become slaves were set free again; citizens henceforward were in no danger of becoming slaves because they could not pay their debts, and a great many were able to pay their debts, and so free their lands, which would have gone to the money-lenders if Solon had not made these changes.

A New Constitution.

But something more was needed to prevent things going wrong again, now that they had once been set right; so Solon changed the constitution. He divided up all the citizens into four classes, according to the value of their lands. Those in

the richest of these classes were now to be the people from whom the archons were chosen, and the whole of the citizens were to choose them. Before this only a noble could be an archon, and it was by the nobles only that the archons had been chosen. Besides this, the assembly of all the citizens or freemen not only chose the archons, but also at the end of each year considered whether the archons had governed properly, and punished any who had not. Thus, you see, though Athens was still in the main an oligarchy, it was a different kind of oligarchy: for, instead of those who were born nobles having the chief power, the chief power now belonged to those who were richest in land. In this way a capable man had a chance to be archon some day, even if he was not born noble. This made it less likely that such men would try to upset the government, and more likely that the government would include a good number of capable men.

By giving all the citizens a voice in choosing their rulers, and still more by giving them the power to punish a bad ruler, Solon made a beginning of democracy (p. 69) at Athens; not that Athens was now an out-and-out democracy, but it was a mixed state, something like our own—partly a democracy, though mainly an oligarchy.

New Laws.

He made many other laws, of which I shall only mention one: if strife broke out in the state, every one was to take one side or the other; for he so far trusted the people as to think that there were more wise men than fools among them, and that, if every one took a side, the right side would be likely to win. This is only one instance of the general rule that the citizens existed for the sake of the state, and had no right to be careless about its welfare. We see another instance in the "liturgies" which wealthy citizens of Athens were called upon to undertake. A "liturgy" meant a costly and often troublesome task, such as providing for the bringing

out of a play at the theatre, or furnishing a ship of war. We know that in many cases citizens spent more money and trouble than they could be compelled to spend, so that they might fulfil these tasks as well as possible, for the credit or the safety of the state. It is probable that "liturgies" began at Athens somewhere about Solon's time, though we do not know that he invented them. These great changes of Solon's were most likely made in the year 594 B.C. ; and, to show you how successful they were, I may tell you that they seem to have cured the debt trouble at Athens once and for all. At Rome, as I daresay you remember, the debt troubles arose again and again, in spite of laws which were meant to end them.

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B.C.

Local Factions.

But another trouble had been going on in Attica before Solon's time which his laws did not cure. As Attica consisted partly of plain or flat country and partly of hills, and had, moreover, a long coast-line, it came about that there were three different sets of people, living on the plain, on the hills, and on the shore. The men of the plain—where the land was best for crops—were the richest ; the men of the shore were in a good position for trade, and came next in wealth ; and the men of the hills were poorest, for they had neither good land for crops, nor any conveniences for trade. Now these three sets of people were not friends, and so Attica was full of "local faction"—that is, quarrels between the different neighbourhoods. In Attica, as in other countries, there were more poor men than rich ; and so, as soon as the poor found a leader, they thought they would get things all their own way.

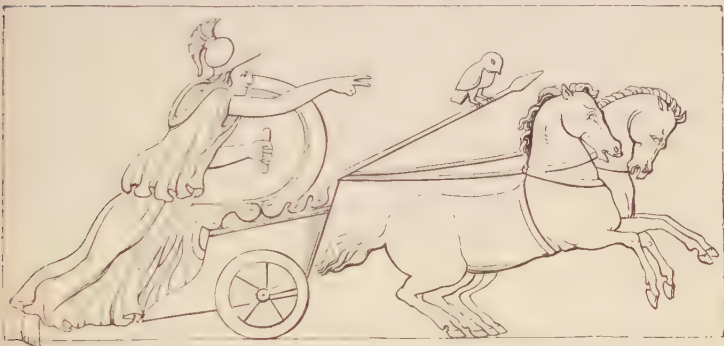
Pisistratus.

Some time after Solon's famous laws were passed, a young noble, related to Solon himself, offered to be their leader ; his name was Pisistratus.

Perhaps Pisistratus was really sorry for the poor, but he was also ambitious—that is, greedy of power; and he soon persuaded the poor men that he ought to have a guard, or else the rich men would murder him. Then, with this guard, he suddenly seized the Acropolis, or citadel of Athens, and so was tyrant, for nobody knew how to turn him out again. Solon had warned the people that this would happen; but he was now getting old, and no one attended to what he said. Pisistratus governed very gently and fairly on the whole, and never did anything to punish Solon for trying to prevent him from being tyrant. But soon after Solon's death the men of the plain and those of the shore were reconciled to each other, and managed to take Pisistratus by surprise and drive him out. Then in a little while they quarrelled again, which gave Pisistratus a chance to come back to Athens and be tyrant once more. He managed this partly by a most curious trick: every one in Athens knew the statues of Athena, in which she appeared like a tall and beautiful woman, wearing a man's armour over a woman's clothes; so Pisistratus dressed a tall and handsome girl like one of these statues, and she came driving into Athens in a chariot, calling on them to receive their old ruler again. The Athenians, really thinking she was the goddess, obeyed, and so Pisistratus was tyrant a second time. This shows how simple the Athenians still were; such a trick would never have deceived them in later times—in the days, say, when Paul the apostle visited Athens.

Soon after this Pisistratus was driven out again, and for ten years he lived in the island of Eubœa, waiting for another chance to get back his power. At last it came, and he landed at Marathon, bringing with him this time, instead of a pretended goddess, a real army of Greeks whom he had hired from other states. Suddenly attacking the Athenians about midday—which was generally a time of rest with the Greeks, as it still is in most hot countries—he took them by surprise, and recovered his power almost without killing any

one. After this he reigned at Athens for the rest of his life, trusting partly to his mercenaries, or hired foreign soldiers, and partly to his own popularity. To make himself more popular, he did all he could to make Athens more famous, more beautiful, and more lively, by setting up a new feast or holiday in honour of the gods, by making fine build-



ATHENA IN CHARIOT.

(*Müller's Denkmäler der Alten Kunst.*)

ings, and by inviting learned and distinguished men to live at his court.

Harmodius and Aristogiton.

All this time Athens was supposed to be still under Solon's laws, and archons were chosen every year; but Pisistratus held all the real power, and when he died his sons held it after him. One of these, named Hipparchus, had a very disgraceful quarrel with a citizen of Athens, and took a very mean revenge by insulting the citizen's sister; this made the citizen so furious that he and his greatest friend made a plot to kill the two tyrant brothers, Hipparchus and Hippias. These two friends, named Harmodius and Aristogiton, managed to kill Hipparchus on a feast day, but did not manage to kill Hippias too. As they were both killed themselves, the Athenians remembered them for hundreds of

years, declaring that they had died to set Athens free ; and in a famous Athenian song which every one in Athens knew, as every one in Scotland knows “Scots wha hae wi’ Wallace bled”—it says that “dearest Harmodius and Aristogiton killed the tyrant and freed Athens.” No doubt they did mean to free Athens, as well as to have their revenge on Hipparchus, but they certainly did not succeed ; and if they had, it would have been a bad way of doing a good thing. To murder a bad or usurping ruler is not so wicked as murdering a good and lawful one, nor perhaps as murdering a private man, but it is murder all the same. Those who have loved freedom best, both in older times and in our own—like the noble old Greek Epaminondas and the noble modern Italian Mazzini—have been the very men who would not try to win back so good a thing as freedom by such bad means as murder. This is worth remembering, as you may sometimes hear quite sensible people talk about “tyrannicide,” or the murder of bad or usurping rulers, in a very strange manner indeed. At any rate, Harmodius and Aristogiton did not set Athens free, for Hippias went on ruling just as before, only that now, being angry and suspicious, he ruled more harshly than before his brother’s death. At last he was driven out in a way nearly as strange as the trick by which his father had once recovered power.

“Athens must be set free.”

Many of the chief Athenians who were not friendly to Pisistratus and his sons had been obliged to leave Athens, and were living in other parts of Greece. One of them, named Clisthenes, was able to persuade the managers of the oracle at Delphi that every one who came from Sparta to ask any question of the oracle should always be told for answer, no matter what the question was, “Athens must be set free.” Clisthenes chose the Spartans to play this trick on, because they were brave, stupid, and great believers in oracles, and also because, though they had been rather

friendly to Pisistratus and his sons, they were generally the enemies of tyrants, and had helped to drive them out of other cities ; so, after puzzling over the matter, the Spartans resolved to obey the oracle, invaded Attica, and, not without a good deal of trouble, managed to drive Hippias out. Afterwards, when they found out how they had been taken in, they tried to put Athens under a tyrant again ; but they never succeeded, though they once actually got into Athens, because their own allies, especially the people of Corinth, who had suffered so much under wicked Periander, were unwilling to do anything to help a tyrant. So Hippias went away and lived in Asia, under the protection of the "Great King," as every one called the King of Persia.

Reforms of Clisthenes.

After all, this was not a very glorious way of winning back freedom—by cheating the people of another state into invading one's own. But Clisthenes seems to have made up his mind that, however freedom had been won back, at least it should be real freedom this time— not oligarchy, or half and half freedom, but democracy, or out and out freedom (p. 69). So he got leave to make a fresh set of changes in the laws, of which I will tell you the most important. First, he had to make an end of "local faction" (p. 75) ; and as he succeeded in doing this as remarkably as Solon succeeded in curing the debt troubles, you should try to understand how he managed it. He divided all the citizens of Athens into ten tribes—they had been in four tribes before— and each tribe into ten parishes or wards, called "demes." But the tribes were not made up of demes that touched each other, as our counties are commonly made up out of parishes that touch ; each of his tribes, on the contrary, was made up of demes belonging to the three divisions of Attica—the Plain, the Shore, and the Hills. In this way he made sure that the men of the Plain, of the Shore, and of the Hills should be well mixed, since each tribe included people belonging to

each of these three parts of the country. And as the men of each tribe had to act together as citizens in peace time, and stand shoulder to shoulder as fighting men in time of war, those who had once been enemies could not help learning to be friends. Like many of the most useful inventions, this was, you see, an extremely simple one. And into these new tribes of his Clisthenes admitted many people who had hitherto been neither citizens nor slaves, and so increased the numbers of the Assembly of the Citizens. Moreover, he gave to this enlarged assembly the power, not only of choosing rulers and punishing any who had ruled badly, but of making war, making peace, settling treaties, changing the laws, fixing the taxes, and, in fact, of doing for Athens what Parliament does for us now. In his time, or soon after, was also set up a new body of rulers, the ten generals—one for each tribe—who not only led the army in war time, but were ministers of state, or rulers, in war time and peace time too. Bit by bit the archons lost most of their power. After a while they came to be chosen in a very strange way—by casting lots: and thenceforward it was a much greater thing to be a general chosen by your fellow-citizens than to be an archon made by the chance of the lot. One other strange law he made—the law of ostracism. If two men in the state were very powerful, and if they could not agree together, so that there was a danger of civil war, the people were to meet together and vote whether or not one of them should leave the country: if six thousand votes were given against either, he was “ostracized” —that is, had to leave Attica for five or ten years. This was not meant either as a punishment or as a disgrace, but was to save Athens from the risk of civil war. Indeed, some of the best and most distinguished Athenians, like Aristides and Cimon, were ostracized. The man on whom ostracism fell would be likely to be the man whom we should now call “Leader of the Opposition”—that is, the chief, not of the most powerful party in the country, but of the party next to it in power.

Athens a Democracy.

So Athens was a democracy at last : every citizen had the right, if only he had the ability, to make himself the foremost man in Athens and leader of the state. In order to do this, he had to persuade his fellow-citizens when they met together to settle state business in the great assembly in the open air. But, of course, only a very skilful speaker could get a huge open-air meeting of

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BEMA OF THE PNYX, FROM WHICH ORATORS ADDRESSED PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES OF THE ATHENIANS.

thousands of restless people to listen to him at all. On this account, public speaking was taught at Athens as part of a good education ; and as a part of public speaking they learned to use gesture — that is, by the movements of their hands and their whole bodies to draw people's attention and help them to follow what was being said. I wish public speaking and the use of gesture were taught in another country, where almost every one has sometimes to speak in public, and very few people can do it at all well.

When Athens was at the height of its power, about seventy years after Clisthenes's time, it most likely contained between twenty thousand and thirty thousand citizens fit to bear arms. But besides these there were always living there numbers of aliens—that is, Greeks who were not citizens of Athens, nor yet slaves. They were chiefly engaged in trade, and, though they had to pay a special tax to the state and also to serve it as soldiers, like the half-free in Laconia (p. 61), they had no share in the government of the country; and it was only now and then—for instance, at the time of Clisthenes's revolution, or great change of the laws—that they had a chance to become citizens. As for the poor slaves, no one dreamed of their being allowed a voice in making the laws. So that, you see, even in the most democratic or freest state in Greece—as Athens now was—there were many people who were not fully free, and many others who were not free at all. Nowadays we should not consider such a state a real or perfect democracy.

Of the other states of Greece, some, after getting rid of their tyrants, had settled down into democracies, having found out, while the tyrants were in power, that their nobles were no such wonderful people after all; others, however, became oligarchies again. The leading democratic state was Athens, the leading oligarchic state perhaps Thebes; but we must not forget that Sparta, under its mixed government, was on the whole an oligarchy, and was the real leader among the oligarchic states.

Per'-i-and-er	Eu-bo'-ic	Har-mod'-i-us	Cli'-sthen-es
Pi-sis'-trat-us	Ac-rop'-ol-is	Ar-ist-o-gi'-ton	demes (<i>one syllable</i>)
Pos-i'-don	Hipp-arch'-us	Hipp'-i-as	Ar-is-ti'-des
Æ-gi-ne'-tan	(<i>ch like k</i>)		

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREEKS AND THE PERSIANS.—MARATHON.

Magna Græcia.

IN very early times—probably soon after the Dorians came into Peloponnesus—the Greeks began to settle not only in the islands, like Eubœa, close to their own mainland, but in the other islands of the Ægean Sea, and also on the opposite coast of Asia. Among the Greek cities in Asia, the Ionian state of Miletus was at first the chief; but there were many other Greek cities both on the coast of Asia and in the islands, some Ionian, some Æolian, some Dorian. After a time the city-states of old Greece began to found other city-states, called colonies, either in islands outside the Ægean, or on the mainland of Asia or Europe—such as Corcyra, in the island of the same name, now called Corfu; Byzantium, now Constantinople; or Massalia, now Marseilles. On the coasts of Italy, towards the south, there were so many of these Greek colonies that the Romans gave the name of *Magna Græcia*, “Great Greece,” to all that region. A good part of Sicily was also occupied by Greeks, who built fine towns along its shores. Taras, called by the Romans Tarentum, was the chief Greek town in Italy; and Syracuse and Agragas—Agrigentum, as the Romans called it—were the two principal ones in Sicily. You have read about these places, no doubt, in your Roman history. Even in Africa the Greeks had settlements, such as Naucratis in Egypt, and Cyrene.

A Greek Colony.

As no part of Greece is very far from the sea, and as its crooked coasts afforded many good harbours, it was natural for the Greeks to take to trading by sea. But nations which use the sea much as traders are sure to begin making settlements or colonies beyond the sea, if they get a chance. This, as you know, is how our own colonies grew up. Only you should carefully distinguish ancient Greek from modern British colonies. In the first place, a Greek colony was a small city-state, and never, like many of our own colonies, a large country. And, in the second place, a Greek colony was nearly always a separate state, governing itself, although it was usual for a colony to be in friendship with the state which had founded it—called its “metropolis,” or mother state—and, if it was in want of help, to ask help of the mother city rather than of any other. Our colonies, on the other hand, even those that for most purposes do govern themselves, are subject to our Queen, and remain parts of the British Empire. And another difference is that our colonies have often begun in quite an accidental way, while a Greek colony was deliberately founded by the government of the mother state. An oracle was first consulted, and then there were regular ceremonies at the foundation. One ceremony was that the first fire lighted on what was called the “public hearth” of the colony had to be kindled from fire brought on purpose from the “public hearth” of the mother state. Again, a Greek colony was different from a Roman colony. The Roman colonies were at first cities full of fighting Romans, settled among a conquered people to keep them subject to Rome, and it was a long time before the Romans began to plant colonies overseas. A Roman colony, to begin with, was meant to keep some newly-conquered Italian or Gaulish race obedient to Rome, while a Greek colony was simply meant to be a new Greek state, where people might “live well,” as the

Greeks said—that is, like civilized men and not like beasts or savages.

There were tyrants over many of these Greek cities beyond seas, long after the tyrants were got rid of in old Greece. Of the cities on the coast of Asia, some were ruled over by tyrants, but all were the subjects or vassals of an Asiatic king—first of the King of Lydia, and later of the “Great King” of Persia. They did not willingly submit to these kings, for they had the feeling that it was unnatural for Greeks to submit to “barbarians” or foreigners, just as we have the feeling that it is unnatural for any Europeans to submit to any Asiatics. But the Asiatic kings were too strong for them, and compelled them to pay tribute, and to help them with men and ships in war time, though they left the Greeks to be ruled by their own laws within their own cities.

Darius.

Now in the year 521 B.C. Persia had a new king, the great Darius, a very able and honest man, far better than most Asiatic kings. He reigned over a great deal besides what is now called Persia, including Egypt and all those parts of Asia which touch the Mediterranean and *Ægean* Seas. Not content with this, he began trying to conquer South Eastern Europe too, and his Greek subjects had to go with him on this expedition. He reached the great river Danube, made a bridge of boats over it, and crossed into the wild country beyond. But here he was baffled, for the wandering people beyond the Danube had no cities which he could seize, neither would they face him in a great battle, and so give him a chance to crush them; so that Darius was like a man fighting with midges—tiring himself out and doing no good. He had to come back without having conquered the country; and when he reached the Danube again he found that his Greeks, who had been left to keep the bridge of boats, not knowing what had become of him, had nearly made up

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their minds to break up the bridge and go home. The man who had been most strong against doing this was Histiaeus, tyrant of Miletus. So when Darius returned to Susa, where the Persian kings usually lived, he took Histiaeus with him to stay at his court.

The Ionian Revolt.

This was supposed to be a great honour, but Histiaeus naturally thought it a finer thing to be a king at Miletus than a courtier in Susa. So he tried to stir up the people of Miletus to rebel against the Persians, hoping that he would then be sent to put the rebellion down. As the Greeks were always uneasy at having to obey a "barbarian," a rebellion was soon started, in which nearly every Greek town on the coast of Asia joined.

But it turned out very badly. Histiaeus was sent down to the coast, turned against the Persians, and was killed. Miletus was taken and burned, and though it was built up again, never could recover its old leading position; and the other cities all had to submit to Persia once more. This unlucky rising—called the "Ionian Revolt," though other Greeks besides Ionians took part in it—led to the two Persian invasions of Greece in Europe. For the Athenians and Eretrians had sent twenty five ships to help the Ionians in their struggle for freedom; and "these ships," says Herodotus, the famous historian of the Persian invasions, "were the beginning of troubles for Greeks and barbarians." The soldiers from the ships went up with the Ionians and burned the town of Sardis, where the Persian governor of that part of Asia lived; and this so angered Darius that, as soon as he had put down the Ionians, he determined to make Athens, Eretria, and the whole of old Greece submit to him.

The First Persian Invasion.

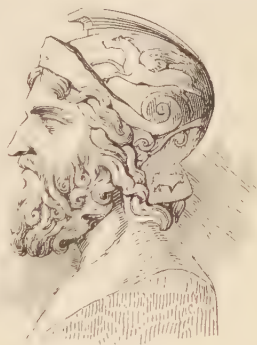
First he sent to all the different cities, bidding them offer him "earth and water." This was the sign by which the

subject states of Persia acknowledged the Persian king as their master. Some of them made the offering, but in Athens and Sparta they killed the messengers for bringing such a message from a barbarian to free Greek cities; and other cities, though they did not kill the messengers, refused to make the offering. Then Darius sent a fleet and army round the north side of the Ægean Sea; but the fleet was wrecked near Mount Athos, and the army got into difficulties and never reached Greece.

But in the year 490 B.C.—a year never to be forgotten—came another Persian fleet, with an army on board, right across the Ægean Sea, touching at different islands on the way, till it reached Eubœa. The city of Eretria, in Eubœa, was betrayed to the Persians, and then they crossed to the mainland and landed at Marathon for the attack on Athens. With the Persians was old

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Hippias, who had long been living under the protection of the Persian king, and it seems that he pointed out Marathon to them as the best place they could choose for landing. The Persian army was over a hundred thousand strong, and the Athenians at that time had only some ten thousand fighting men fit to face an enemy in the open. This little army was commanded by the ten Athenian generals chosen by the people for the year, and one of these was a very remarkable man, named Miltiades.



MILTIADES.

(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

Miltiades.

He had been tyrant or king of the Thracian Chersonese or Peninsula, which lies along the north-west side of the strait

called the Hellespont, and had also been a most unwilling subject of the Persian king's. Naturally he joined in the Ionian revolt, and, when it was put down, fled to Athens; for, besides being tyrant of the Chersonese, he was an Athenian citizen, as his father had been before him. The Athenians had chosen him to be one of the generals for this eventful year—which they would not have been likely to do if he had given himself any kingly airs at Athens—and they could not have chosen a better man. No one of these ten generals was in chief command, but they had to consult together and agree on a plan if they could—a very bad arrangement, for fighting, more than almost any other business, needs to be planned out and directed by one man. If they could not agree, then one of the archons, called the “polemarch,” or war ruler, had to decide what was to be done. Now, when they heard that the Persians were at Marathon, only a few miles off, half of the generals thought that, as their country was being invaded, they ought to fight at once. The other half thought that, as the odds were more than ten to one against them, they ought to wait in the hope of getting help from other Greek cities. Then Miltiades, who was all for fighting at once, went to Callimachus, the polemarch, and told him that it was now in his power either to ruin Athens, or to strike such a stroke for freedom as would make him famous for ever—more famous than Harmodius and Aristogiton. So Callimachus was persuaded, and gave the word to fight at once. Meanwhile they had sent off a swift runner to ask help at Sparta, and the Spartans really meant to help them, but one of their foolish superstitions about the moon being in an unlucky quarter prevented their marching till too late.

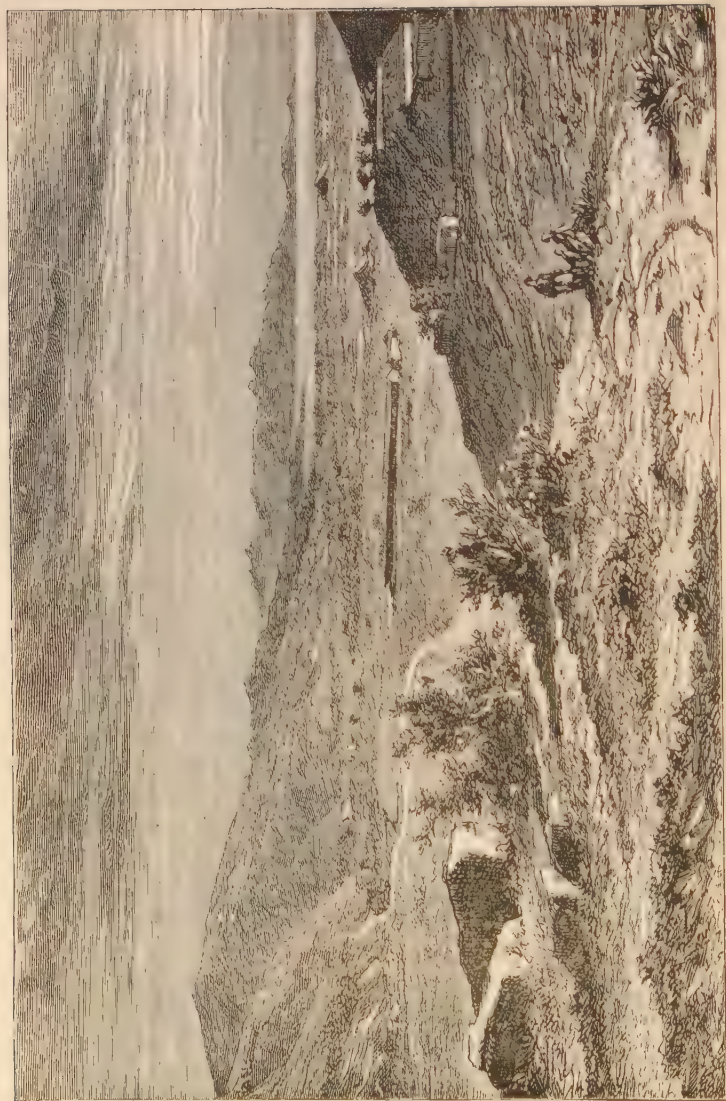
So the Athenians marched out alone to fight the great host of the Persians, but when they were already drawn up in order of battle, and not above a mile from the enemy, a brave little force from Plataea came to join them. Plataea was a small town which the Athenians had helped when

it was being badly used by its big neighbour Thebes : and now the Plateans, remembering this, gratefully and gallantly came to share the terrible danger in which their friends the Athenians stood. They sent their whole fighting force—perhaps about a thousand men : and, few as they were, you may be sure the Athenians were glad to see them.

Marathon.

Greek battles, before Epaminondas's time, were generally fought on a very simple plan. The pikemen (p. 33), serving on foot in their heavy armour, were drawn up in a long oblong block of three divisions, called the right wing, centre, and left wing. The cavalry, if there were any, were placed at each end, and any archers or light troops, after trying what they could do to upset the enemy by shooting at them, would move out beyond the wings before the rest charged or closed in upon the enemy. The "depth" of the pikemen—that is, the number of men from front to back—was usually not less than eight, and the length of the block or line would depend on the length of the enemy's line, for it would not do to let the enemy's line overlap one's own at the ends.

Now at Marathon the Greeks, with not much more than ten thousand men, had to make as long a line as the Persians with a hundred thousand ; so, of course, their army could not be nearly so deep as the Persians. But, to give themselves as good a chance as possible, they made the wings deep, though this forced them to leave the centre very shallow. They had no cavalry and no archers, and when they opened the battle by starting to charge from a mile off, the Persians thought they were mad. But down came the Greeks, crashing into their enemies : and though after that there was a long and terrible struggle, at last the Greek wings beat the Persian wings. Then, wheeling in on the Persian centre, they beat that too, and chased the whole Persian army down to their ships. They shouted for fire to burn the ships with, but it



THE PLAIN OF MARATHON.

seems there was none to be had ; they took some ships, however, and killed a great many of the Persians. The rest of the ships got off ; and the Persians, sailing round Cape Sunium, the south-east point of Attica, came up the bay to strike one more blow at Athens itself. But the Greek army had marched across from Marathon quicker than the Persians could sail round, and now stood ranked between the city and the sea, ready to fight them again. So the Persians did not care to land, but sailed away home to Asia. When the trouble was all over, the Spartans marched in, too late to be of any use whatever.

Results of the Victory.

The Athenians were very proud of their victory, as they well might be, and never forgot the day of Marathon. They had beaten a great army with a small one, but this was not all. So often had Persians beaten Greeks in Asia that almost every one took for granted they would do the same in Europe ; and this, of course, made it far harder for the Greeks to keep their hearts up and fight their best. Before the battle of Marathon the very sight of a Persian, says Herodotus, scared the Greeks. Yet when once they ventured to dash into the middle of the Persians, as they did at Marathon, they found them not so very hard to beat ; for they had not such good pikes, and were not, like the Greek pikemen, almost completely covered with metal armour. They were, in fact, more like Greek light armed troops, and trusted to the bow much more than the pike to win their battles, so that the Greeks' sudden rush into the midst of them had upset them altogether. Besides this, though the Persians themselves were brave enough, a Persian army was made up of people of many different races, speaking different languages, caring little or nothing for one another, and not much for what they were fighting about. It is no great wonder that even a far smaller body of Greek freemen, fighting for their freedom, overthrew a

motley host like this. As the Athenians never forgot their own achievements at Marathon, so they always remembered their brave helpers from Plataea, and henceforward at the great Athenian feasts prayer was always made first for blessings on Athens and then for blessings on Plataea. Real gratitude is not often shown by one state to another, and it is pleasant to find that as Plataea had really been grateful to Athens, so Athens remembered what was owing to Plataea.

Death of Miltiades.

The brave polemarch Callimachus was killed in the battle, but Miltiades, the real conqueror, came to a far sadder end. He persuaded the Athenians, who were now ready to do anything for him, to let him have a fleet and army, telling them only that he would make them rich, and then sailed away to attack the Greeks of the island of Paros, with whom he had an old quarrel. But he could not take their city, and after getting a bad hurt in the thigh, came home again, without the riches he had promised to bring. Of course he did wrong in attacking Paros, and he was tried for this offence, and condemned to pay a very heavy fine. Soon afterwards, and before the fine could be paid, he died of the hurt in his thigh. Miltiades was one of the great adventurers; our own country has produced many such men. They often do great things for their country, but their country, or their country's government, does not always use them very well, as you will know if you have read about Walter Raleigh or Warren Hastings, Joseph Garibaldi or Charles Gordon.

Mi-le'tus
By-zan'ti-um

Mass-a'l'i-a

Tar-ent'um

Sy'rac-use (*three*
syllables)

Ac'rag-as
Ag-ri-gent'um

Nau'crat-is

Cy-re'ne

Dar-i'us

His-ti-æ'us

He-rod'ot-us

Mil-ti'ad-es

Cher'son-ese (*ch like k,*
three syllables)

Call-im'ach-us (*ch like k*)

Su'ni-um

CHAPTER VII.

THE SECOND PERSIAN INVASION.—THERMOPYLÆ, SALAMIS, AND PLATÆA.

Themistocles and Aristides.

AFTER Miltiades's disgrace and death, the two leading men at Athens were Themistocles and Aristides. They called Aristides "the Just," because every one knew that he was perfectly honest, and would not take bribes. This was not a very common virtue among Greek statesmen, and certainly Themistocles did not share it, for he grew rich by taking presents from all kinds of people, and many of these presents were really bribes. But we must not judge Themistocles as if he were a modern British statesman; very slowly, and with immense trouble, things have been so far improved in our country that we do not now even suspect our statesmen, or generals, or judges of taking bribes; but not many countries can say as much as that even nowadays.

There had been a long and obstinate struggle going on between Athens and the islanders of Ægina, in which the Athenians had not had much success, for want of a strong



THEMISTOCLES.
(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

fighting fleet. Themistocles persuaded them to make Piræus their harbour instead of Phalerum, which was not nearly so suitable, to fortify Piræus with a wall, and to build new fighting ships. In this way they soon had the most powerful fighting fleet in Greece, and so at last were able to conquer Ægina. But Themistocles was not content with that; they must, he told them, "keep a grip of the sea," if Athens was to be as strong as she ought to be. Aristides thought it would not do to trust too much to sea-power, and was afraid the poorer citizens, who served as sailors, would learn to despise the richer ones, who served as heavy-armed soldiers, and were, as Aristides thought, the true strength of the state. But Aristides, who was certainly wrong in trying to keep his countrymen from increasing their navy, was ostracized (p. 80), and Themistocles had things his own way.

The Second Persian Invasion.

We may be quite sure that Themistocles was not only thinking of Ægina when he begged his countrymen to make and keep a strong navy, and pretty sure that he was thinking of the real danger, Persia. For although Darius was now dead, and his son Xerxes, the new king of Persia, was a feeble king, it was not likely that a great and victorious kingdom like Persia would give up trying to conquer a little country like Greece because they had once
 480
 B.C. been soundly beaten. And accordingly, ten years after Marathon, the Persians came again; and this time their king came with them, though he might as well have stayed at home for any good he did. To begin with, he made the mistake—always a common one, especially in Asia—of thinking that the larger an army is the stronger it must be. So he gathered a huge multitude of all the many races that obeyed him—who wore different dresses and used different weapons, spoke different languages, and neither understood nor cared for one another—and felt sure that he would crush the Greeks by sheer weight of numbers. He

even made the Greeks from Asia join him, though they were not very likely to fight well against men of their own race, for a master whom they did not like. What the real numbers of this immense army were we cannot tell, but it was certainly many times larger than the army Darius had sent ten years before. It was to march all round the northern end of the Ægean Sea, and a large fleet was to accompany it all the way.

Preparation for the Invasion.

Two great engineering works were carried out by Xerxes's order, to make the way easier for his forces. First he had a great bridge of boats, or rather of ships, laid across the Hellespont, to save ferrying his army over; and next he had a canal cut through the neck which joins Mount Athos to the mainland of Europe, to save his fleet from having to pass close under Athos, where a Persian fleet had once been wrecked (p. 87). The floating bridge over the Hellespont was destroyed by a storm before it could be used, and Xerxes showed himself both childish and cruel, for he had the engineers put to death and the Hellespont itself flogged! But a second bridge was soon built, which stood better. As for the canal behind Mount Athos, it was little better than a piece of costly folly, for it took a great deal of labour to cut it, and after all it cannot have been of much real service.

All these preparations could not in any case have been made without the knowledge of the Greeks; but Xerxes gave them fair warning by sending messengers to all the Greek cities, except Athens and Sparta, to demand "earth and water," as his father had done. The Spartans and Athenians, having killed his father's messengers, had now to expect severe punishment if Xerxes got them into his power. Thus warned, the Greeks, for the first time in their history, made up their minds to act as a united people; and a meeting was held at Corinth, to which nearly all the different states sent representatives (p. 30), except Argos,

which hated Sparta, and Thebes, which hated Athens. The other states settled their quarrels, agreed to act together, and sent to ask help of the Greeks oversea, as far away even as Sicily. But the Greeks in Sicily were attacked that same year by the Carthaginians, who had very likely been persuaded by the Persians to make the attack, and the dwellers in old Greece found that they must trust to what they could do themselves for the defence of their country.

On the March.

At last Xerxes started; his great host crossed into Europe by the floating bridge, marched through Thrace and Macedon—now called Turkey in Europe—and entered Thessaly without resistance. A Greek force had marched to the Pass of Tempe, to stop them there; but, finding that there was another pass farther west by which the Persians might “turn their position”—that is, get round behind them—they fell back to the south, leaving the rich plain of Thessaly to the enemy. Meanwhile the Persian fleet had sailed round the coast, keeping as near as they could to the army, and reached in safety the great headland of Magnesia, which juts out from South-Eastern Thessaly. But here, while their ships were partly drawn up on a narrow strip of level shore, and partly anchored in several rows near it, a fierce storm from the north-east—a “Hellespenter,” as the Greeks called it—burst upon them, and, blowing for three days, wrecked a great many ships.

Preparations for Defence.

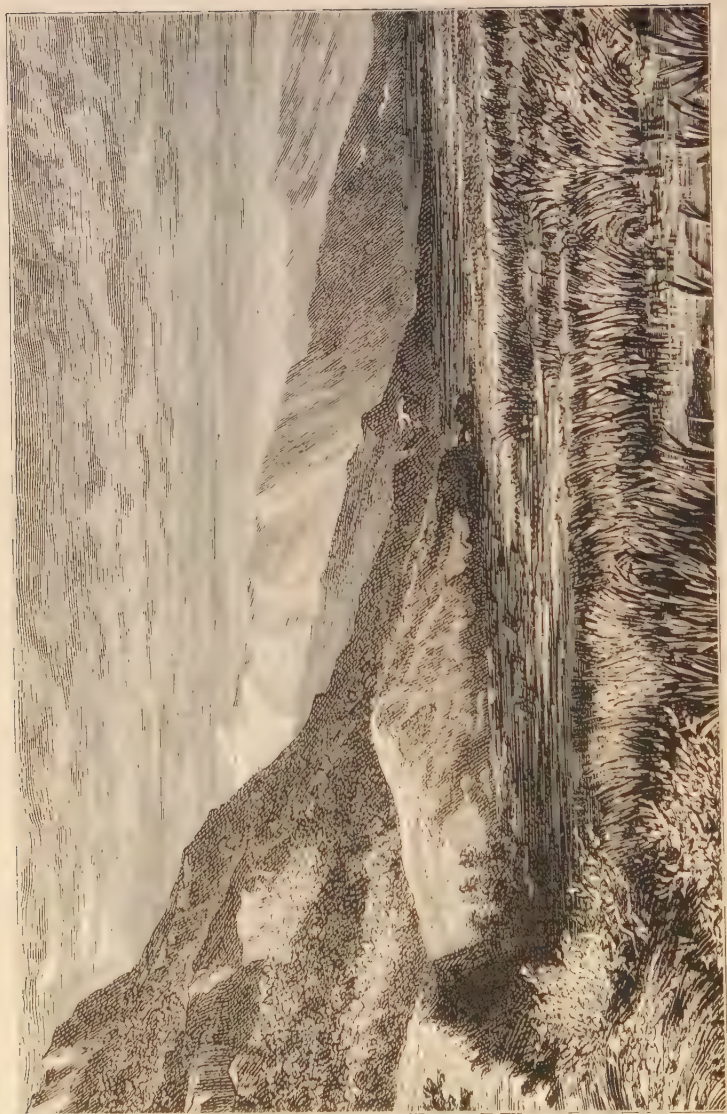
When the good news of this storm reached the Greek fleet, then lying in shelter between Eubœa and the mainland, they came boldly out to meet the Persians off Artemisium, the north point of the island. The Persians had still more than three times as many ships as the Greeks, but for all that there was a chance of keeping them out of the Malian Gulf, and this it was necessary to do; for in the

Pass of Thermopylæ, along the south side of the gulf, a Greek land force was now lying to block the way against Xerxes's army. If the Persians could get their ships into the gulf, they would "turn" the pass at once by landing men at the east end of it.

It seems an astonishing thing that, when Xerxes was already in Greece, the Greeks should have been able to think of anything except the best way to meet the invader. But there is an old and true saying, "The Greeks are always children," and they were very like children in their behaviour now. It was the year of the Olympic games, and they actually held the games as usual, although this left only a small number of men free to face Xerxes at Thermopylæ. The Dorians, too, had a summer feast going on, at Sparta and elsewhere, which was also kept as usual. So that when Leonidas, one of the two Spartan kings, marched north to hold the pass, he took with him only three hundred Spartan citizens; and the helots and the troops from other states which joined him on the march only made up his numbers to a few thousands. Of course we ought to remember that these games and feasts were not only for amusement, but were also looked on as religious acts; still, it would have been far better to beat the Persians first, and to honour the gods and hold rejoicings afterwards.

Thermopylæ.

Though a pass is generally a gap in a range of mountains, Thermopylæ—that is, the "Hot Gates" or "Hot Pass"—was not a gap through hills, but a narrow space between the hills and the sea. These hills ended towards the sea in a long line of almost sheer cliffs; below these was a very narrow strip of flat land, in some places barely wide enough to carry the road; beyond this a strip of salt marsh, and then the sea. It was called the "Hot Gates" because there are springs of hot water there; and I should tell you that the coast-line runs much farther out from the cliffs now, so that.



PASS OF THERMOPYLE AT THE PRESENT DAY.

if you visited the place, you might at first be puzzled to understand how it was ever a difficult pass at all. Just in the narrowest part of the pass was an old tumble-down wall, which Leonidas put in repair, meaning to hold it against the enemy. But he found that this pass too could be "turned"—as indeed almost every pass can—by a hill-path which crossed the high ground above the cliffs. So he set the Phocians, who lived near and knew the country, to guard this path, and with the rest of his men he watched the road below.

Xerxes Puzzled and Checked.

Xerxes, coming from the north, reached the west end of the pass, and waited there for some days, thinking that Leonidas and his few men would be frightened and retreat, which would save the Persians the trouble of driving them out. A scout sent out by Xerxes brought in word that he had seen the Spartans just in front of their wall, some of them engaged in active games and others in combing their hair. This puzzled Xerxes very much, but an exiled Spartan king, who was with him, explained that it meant that the Spartans would fight where they stood: his countrymen, he told Xerxes, always made themselves as tidy and as smart as they could when they were going into battle (p. 60). Xerxes would not believe him, and still waited in the hope that the Greeks would retire: but at last his patience wore out, and he sent a large body of his men with orders to take the Greeks alive. But, man for man, the Greeks in their metal armour were far more than a match for the Asiatics; and as for the odds of numbers, in such narrow ground only a very few men could be fighting at a time, and the rest of the attacking party only crowded on one another and made confusion. In a little while the Asiatics came huddling out of the pass again, leaving behind only those whom the Greeks had killed or disabled, or who had been trampled down by the rush of their own frightened comrades. Again and again the same thing happened.

Xerxes, who sat on a high throne and watched the battle from a distance, even sent up the "Immortals," as they were called—his own bodyguard, supposed to consist of the best soldiers he had ; but neither could they do any good with their pikes against the much better pikes of the Greeks. Next day the Persians thought they would surely win. for such a small number of Greeks, some of whom they knew had been killed or wounded in the first day's fighting, would not, they felt certain, be able to hold out for another day. But, few as the Greeks were, the men who were actually fighting at any one time in such a narrow space were still fewer, and so they had taken turns : no one was allowed to tire himself out ; and the second day they were nearly as fresh as the first, and even more certain that they could beat the Persians off. And so they did, for the attacks of the Asiatics on the second day all failed, as they had on the first.

A Traitor.

But that evening a miserable traitor told Xerxes of the hill path ; and he sent off a body of men to cross the hill during the night, and so "turn" the pass by seizing the east end of it. Of course the Phocians ought to have prevented this ; but when the Persians drew near to them, and had been assured that they were not Spartans, they began to shoot at them ; and the Phocians retreated, under a rain of arrows, towards the upper part of the hill, thinking no doubt that the Persians would follow them. But the Persians knew their business better than the Phocians knew theirs, and went straight on to carry out their orders by seizing the east end of the pass.

Before daybreak Leonidas and his men had word that the pass would soon be blocked behind them. Seeing that most of the men were not willing to stay, Leonidas gave them all leave to go, only saying that he himself and the Spartans would of course stay, as it was not for Spartans to leave a post that they had been ordered to hold. This was certain

death to him and his men ; but an oracle had declared that Sparta must either be conquered or lose one of its kings, and no doubt Leonidas hoped, like Codrus, king of Athens, by giving his own life to save his country. But courage is catching, just as cowardice is ; and the Thespians from Bœotia, when they heard that the Spartans meant to stay, said they would stay for company ; and then Leonidas said that the Thebans should stay too, because it was known that their city wished too well to the Persians. So some fourteen hundred men stayed in all—three hundred Spartans, seven hundred Thespians, and four hundred unwilling Thebans—and the rest made haste to be gone while the road was still open behind them.

Spartan Courage.

In this third day's fighting the Greeks that stayed in the pass no longer kept the line of the wall, but marched out into a rather wider part of the pass ; for their wish was now to kill and be killed quickly, and get the thing over. The Persians came up from the west, driven on by their officers with whips. The Greeks fought them till their spears were broken, and then fought on with their swords. Leonidas was killed, and in the fierce fight over his body the Greeks drove back their enemies four times over. At last, when they heard that the other Persians were coming up from behind, they fell back to a little hill ; and there they fought with their daggers, their fists, and even their teeth, so that the barbarians were afraid to close in on them, and killed them at last by flinging great stones on them from a distance. Only the Thebans, separating themselves from the rest, cried out to the Persians to spare their lives, and were taken prisoners.

The courage of Leonidas and his Spartans in this wonderful three days' battle has never been forgotten. The Thespians did well too ; but, after all, they were only following the example of the Spartans. People sometimes speak as if it

was folly for these brave men to fling their lives away for nothing; but the truth is, it was not for nothing. The barbarians were masters of the pass, but every Greek felt braver, every Asiatic less brave, after Thermopylæ than before; and so, by encouraging their own men and discouraging the enemy, Leonidas and his men really helped to drive the Persians out of Greece, though they did not live to see this done. When it was done, and there was leisure to think of paying due honours to the noble dead, a monument to the Spartans was put up in the pass, with these two lines of verse upon it:—

“Sir, let them know in Lacedæmon we
Lie here and keep their law continually.”

Artemisium.

While the great land fight went on in the pass, a sea fight was going on off Artemisium. Look at the map again, and you will see that if the Persian fleet had been able to get into the Malian Gulf, it would have been useless for Leonidas's men to hold Thermopylæ, since the Persian fleet could have landed troops behind them. So that the battle of Artemisium was, as it were, the sea half of the battle of Thermopylæ; and there too the Greeks did well, holding out for days against heavy odds, and only retiring through the narrow strait between Eubœa and the mainland when they heard that the Persians were turning the land pass.

Athens in Danger.

From Thermopylæ the Persians advanced towards Athens, and unless they could get help from the Greeks in Peloponnesus, it was hopeless for the Athenians to think of holding their city against Xerxes. If the Spartans and other Peloponnesians would have advanced into Boeotia, they might have fought a great battle there and saved Athens; but they would not venture upon this, and were only thinking about making a wall across the Isthmus of Corinth

to keep the Persians out of Peloponnesus. There were, of course, a great many oracles being repeated on all sides—as was commonly the case when there was any cause for excitement or anxiety in Greece—and most of them were of a rather discouraging kind. The Athenians had been told that their “wooden wall alone should not be won,” and that “divine Salamis should destroy the sons of women;” and Themistocles persuaded them that this meant that their fleet was to save them, and that they would win a sea battle off Salamis. But they had to leave the town—men, women, and children—the fighting men going on board the ships of war, and the helpless people being sent off to the islands of Salamis and Ægina, or to Peloponnesus. Considering the way the Peloponnesians had treated them, it is greatly to the credit of the Athenians that they did this, and did not try to win favour from Xerxes by deserting to his side, as the Thebans had now done. For once the Athenians showed a virtue very rare among Greeks, for they did what was best for all Greece instead of what was safest for their own city.

A Bold Stratagem.

When Xerxes reached Athens with his land army he did all the damage there he possibly could, and finally set the city on fire. His fleet meanwhile had entered the Saronic Gulf, while the Greek fleet lay farther to the west, in the narrows between Salamis and the mainland of Attica. About half of this fleet consisted of Athenian ships under the command of Themistocles. He and his fellow-citizens were most anxious to fight where they were; but, in spite of all that had happened, many of the other Greeks were unwilling to risk another battle. Then Themistocles did a desperate thing: he sent a secret message to Xerxes, advising him to block the Greeks into the bay of Salamis, and so force them to fight. If his own side had known about this message, no doubt the other Greek commanders, some of whom were very unfriendly to him, would have



ROADSTEAD OF SALAMIS.

accused him of betraying Greece to the enemy. It was a fearful risk to run - such a risk as many brave men would have utterly refused to face ; but Themistocles had just that spirit of daring which in a desperate case will try a desperate remedy, and his daring was rewarded. Before leaving their city the Athenians had invited all those of their countrymen who were in exile to come and help against the invaders. Aristides, who, as you know, had been ostracized, hastened to join his countrymen ; and when he reached the Greek ships at Salamis, he brought the news that the Persian ships had blocked them into the bay of Salamis, that he had only just been able to slip past them, and that the Greeks would have to fight where they were. The Persians had more than twice as many ships as the Greeks, and were to fight under the eye of their king, who had a throne set up for him on the shore, looking out over the bay. But in reality their great numbers were more hindrance than help to them, since, in the narrow waters where they were to fight, their ships were crowded together, and they had not room to use their oars properly. For fighting ships in ancient times were not nearly so large either as modern ironclads or as the three-deckers of the time of Nelson, and they went into battle neither under sail nor of course under steam, but were rowed in with oars.

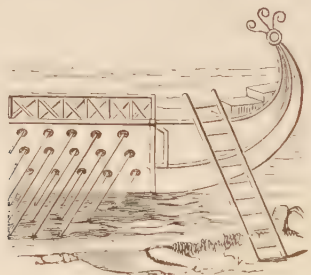
Salamis.

On the morning of the battle the great multitude of Persian ships and the smaller fleet of the Greeks rowed out to meet each other. Then for a while the spirit of the Greeks seemed to fail, when they saw the great odds against them ; but suddenly a brave Athenian captain bade his men row ahead at full speed, and so dashed into one of the enemy's ships and began the battle. Then all the Greek ships joined in, and for hours the bay was full of the noise and turmoil of battle, till at last the Asiatics began to lose heart, and those of their ships that could came

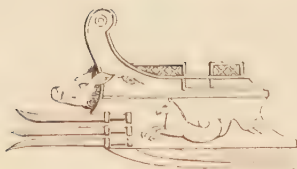
480
B.C.

fleeing out of the strait to the south-east. The Greeks had won a great victory.

Utterly disheartened by this defeat, Xerxes hurried home himself by land, while the remains of his fleet went off to guard the floating bridge over the Hellespont. Themistocles, to add to his fright, had sent him another secret message,



PART OF ANCIENT SHIP WITH THREE TIERS OF OARS.



BEAK OF ANCIENT WARSHIP.



ANCIENT SHIP WITH TOWER.

saying that the Greeks meant to sail across and break his bridge. He had really tried to persuade them to do this, but as they would not, he sent this message to Xerxes as the next best thing.

Plataea.

The whole Persian land army went with the king for the first part of the retreat; but when he reached Northern Greece he left a large force behind there, and Mardonius, their commander, was to conquer all Greece for his master next year. The Athenians hastened home to Athens as soon

as the Persians left it, and began to build up their ruined city again. But in the spring of the next year the Persians under Mardonius again advanced, and as the Peloponnesians did not march out to meet them, the Athenians had to choose once more between siding with their enemies and leaving Athens. Angry as they were with the Peloponnesians, they would not desert Greece ; once more they left Athens, once more the Persians entered it and did all the mischief they could. Then at last the Peloponnesian army came ; the Athenian land forces joined it ; and in Boeotia, near Platæa, the great fight was fought which cleared Greece of the Persians once and for all.

479
B.C.

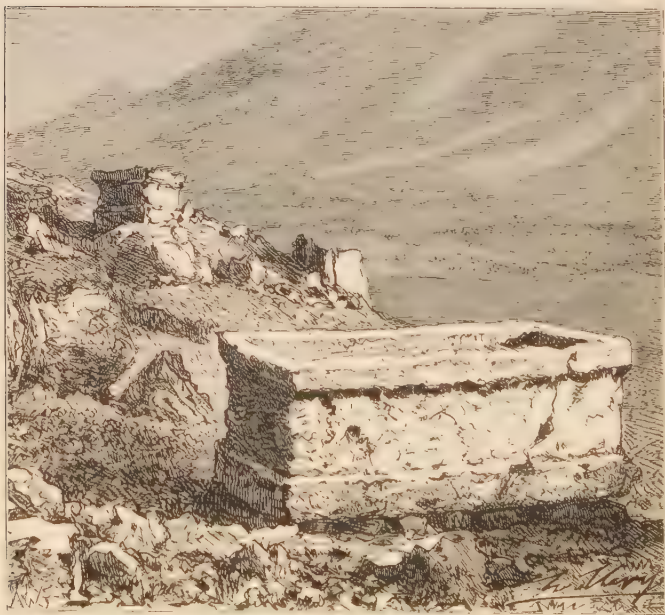
Mardonius had probably two or three times as many men as the Greeks, and Pausanias, who, as commander of the Spartans, took the lead in the Greek army, was a very different man from Leonidas---neither very brave nor very skilful. He managed things so badly that, when the battle began, his centre was far away behind, and at first the two Greek wings had to fight with a great gap between them where the centre should have been. But once more it was seen that the Greeks, with their long pikes and metal armour, were an overmatch for the badly-armed Asiatics. The Spartans drove the Persians into their camp, and when they could not take the camp---for they were always bad at storming the simplest kind of fort or walled place---the Athenians and some Arcadians came up and led the way in. Mardonius was killed in the battle, and nearly the whole Persian army was slaughtered in their camp, though one large body managed to slip off and make its way back to Asia.

Greece Free.

Thus Greece was freed from the invaders. The war still went on, but it was now the Greeks who attacked the Persians. Indeed, on the very day on which the Greeks won the battle of Platæa, a force landed from the Greek fleet on the coast of Asia and beat the Persians at Mycale,

a headland running into the *Ægean* Sea near the island of Samos.

From Marathon to Plataea the leaders in this great struggle for freedom had been the Athenians: they had done most, they had suffered most, and had shown the world what a democracy, in which a man is not serving a master,



TOMBS AT PLATEA.

but doing his utmost for himself and his friends, can do at its best. As for the Spartans, except at Thermopylae, they had done very little, considering what great fighting men they were supposed to be.

These two wars against the Asiatic invaders were the most glorious of all the wars of the Greeks. And do not think that their success is no concern of ours. If the Persians

had conquered Greece, it is almost certain that they would have found no other settled country in Europe able to resist them, for Rome was as yet but a little state. But if they had conquered all the best parts of Europe, they would have made Europe just like Asia, and, as far as we can tell, we in the British Islands should be just like Asiatics now. If you know what this means—or if, without exactly knowing why, you had rather be a European than an Asiatic—be grateful to the Greeks, who, at Marathon and Thermopylæ, Salamis and Platæa, were fighting our battles as well as their own.

Them-ist'oc-les

Phal-er'um

Thrace (*one syllable*)

Ma'ced-on

Pho'ci-ans

Thes'pi-ans

Mar-don'i-us

Pau-san'i-as

Myc'al-e

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GLORY OF ATHENS.—PERICLES.

Building a Wall.

WHEN Xerxes took and burned Athens, the sacred olive tree in the Acropolis was burned too ; but immediately after, as the Athenians declared, a long, fresh shoot sprang up from the stump, and this they looked on as a sign from the gods that their city should rise once more from its ruins. A better and surer sign was their own unbroken spirit. They lost no time after the Persians were got rid of, but set to work to build up their houses, their temples, and most especially their city wall. But the Spartans, most ungenerously and ungratefully, wished to keep Athens unwalled and helpless, and actually sent to ask them not to build up their wall, pretending that the Persians might come again—which was now very unlikely—and use Athens as a strong place from which to attack Peloponnesus. Themistocles, fearing that the Spartans in their jealousy might stop the work on the wall by force, used a most ingenious trick to baffle them. He went to Sparta himself, as one of a set of ambassadors, leaving word that the Athenians should work on the wall day and night, and not send his fellow-ambassadors to join him till the wall was high enough to be a real defence to the city. At Sparta he pretended to be rather surprised that the other ambassadors took so long to come, but said that when they came he and they together would easily settle with the Spartan government what had

better be done. In the meantime he assured the Spartans that the Athenians were not working at the wall. Of course news soon came in that they were. So Themistocles said that if they did not believe him they could send some of their own citizens to see. This they did; and when, soon after, Themistocles's fellow ambassadors reached Sparta, he told the Spartans openly that Athens was now walled, and that he had been deceiving them. Angry as they were, they were obliged to let the Athenian ambassadors go home in safety, or their own citizens would never have come back to Sparta, for Themistocles had quietly sent word to Athens not to let them go till he and his companions returned. It is very hard to say how far Themistocles was right in doing as he did; perhaps, considering the helplessness of Athens and the unneighbourly behaviour of the Spartans, it could not be helped. But it is easy to see that there could be no good or steady friendship between states that went on playing such tricks on one another. Modern statesmen sometimes do things of the same kind in dealing with foreign governments, and now and then with far less excuse than Themistocles had; but the main result of this kind of dealing is that the governments of different states cannot trust each other, and that a real friendship between countries is made almost impossible.

The Delian League.

Meanwhile the Greek fleets carried on the war against Persia. One after another the Greek cities that had been obliged to submit to Persia, whether in the islands or on the mainland of Asia or Europe, were set free again, and the Persians were driven out of Macedon and Thrace. At first the Spartans took the lead in this work, for the Greeks still looked on Sparta as somehow the foremost state among them. But Pausanias behaved so badly, giving himself the airs of an Asiatic king, instead of doing his work as a Greek commander, that the other Greeks at last refused to follow

his lead, and put themselves under Aristides, who was in command of the Athenian ships. This was the beginning of the famous "Delian League," with Athens at its head, and most of the Greek cities in the *Ægean* islands and on the north and east coasts of the *Ægean* Sea, along with others that lay still farther east, as its members. The purpose of the league was to keep its members, and as far as possible all Greeks, from being subject to Persia. Each state in the league was to furnish help, consisting of men, money, and also ships, as the war was now in the main a sea war. So thoroughly did the Greeks trust Aristides that they allowed him to settle how much help each state was to send every year; they certainly would not have trusted Pausanias to do this, and I do not think they would have trusted Themistocles. This sea war against Persia went on for many years, and was on the whole very successful. The greatest of the Greek commanders in it was the Athenian Cimon, son of the famous Miltiades. He did great things against the Asiatics, and died while managing the war against them, in the island of Cyprus, in the year 449 B.C. Soon after his death the war came to an end.

449

B.C.

Fall of Pausanias and Themistocles.

As for Pausanias, not only had he offended the Greeks by his arrogance, but he had actually turned traitor, and was sending secret messages to the Persian king, offering to help him to conquer Greece. After his return to Sparta he still sent messages to Persia, and when at last he was found out took "sanctuary" in a temple. A Greek temple was a "sanctuary," just as a Christian church was in the Middle Ages—that is to say, even a criminal who took refuge in one could not be killed there or dragged out by force. But the Spartans were not going to let Pausanias off, so they walled up the temple door, kept him inside till he was starving, and then, when he was too weak to struggle, opened the

door again, and quietly carried him out to die in the open air. It was rather a question whether even this was not breaking the right of sanctuary; but, at any rate, Pausanias was a traitor, and got no more than his deserts.

By his wickedness and folly Pausanias ruined a much greater man than himself, Themistocles the Athenian. He had tried to draw him into his miserable plot, and though it is not the least likely that Themistocles ever thought of joining it, when Pausanias's guilt was discovered, it was also discovered that he and Themistocles had been writing to each other. Themistocles had meanwhile lost his popularity at Athens, and had been ostracized. Knowing that the Spartans hated him for the trick he had played them about the wall, and that many people in Athens and in other Greek states also hated him, because he had taken their money and then not always done as they had asked him, he did not dare to face a trial, as Aristides or any perfectly honest man would have done. So he fled from Argos, where he was staying, and, after some very narrow escapes, came into Asia, and put himself under the protection of the new king of Persia—for Xerxes was now dead. He promised the king that he would show him the way to conquer Greece; but as he never did this, I think we may hope that he was only deceiving him, as he had deceived Xerxes and the Spartans before, and that he never would have turned traitor, like Pausanias, and tried to ruin his own country. He never came back to Greece, but died an exile in Asia. He was a great statesman, though not a very honest one, and was the founder of the Athenian power on the sea. When the different Greek leaders in the struggle against Xerxes had been called upon to say which of their number had done best for Greece, each man said that he had himself done best; but all, or nearly all, agreed that Themistocles came next. If Miltiades was the one man who baffled the first Persian invasion, undoubtedly Themistocles was the one man who baffled the second. In other respects

Miltiades and Themistocles were very different—the first a great adventurer, the second a great intriguer. Of all modern statesmen, Prince Bismarck is perhaps the one who most resembles Themistocles.

Wars in Greece.

Both before and after the Persian invasions there were many wars between the different Greek states. The Greeks did not think of these wars as civil wars; it would have been far better if they had, for then they might have tried to avoid them. On the contrary, they looked on wars between different Greek states as quite natural. Even when two of them made peace, it was often only a truce – that is, a peace for so long, not for ever – as if they grudged giving up their liberty to fight and injure one another. When you grow older you can read about all those unhappy quarrels between Sparta and Argos, Athens and Thebes, and the rest. But it is enough for you to remember just now that there was nearly always a war going on, or just newly settled, or expected soon to break out, somewhere or other in Greece, and that this was a very bad thing for the Greeks. Even when they did unite against Xerxes, Argos, as you know, stood aside and did nothing, and Thebes actually helped the Persians, because of old quarrels between these cities and their neighbours. And as soon as they had got rid of the Persians, Sparta very nearly made war on Athens, to prevent the Athenians from walling their own city again.

But between the victory of Plataea in 479 B.C. and the beginning of the Peloponnesian War in 431 B.C. there was no great war, though there were many small ones, going on within Greece; and all that time Athens was, on the whole, growing richer and stronger, more famous and more beautiful. The great Athenian statesman under whose guidance the city made this progress was Pericles.

Prosperity of Athens.

The wealth of Athens came partly from trade, partly from the money paid by the different members of the Delian League. This money was lodged in the island of Delos—and that is how the league got its name—a very small though very sacred island in the Ægean. All of it, of course, ought to have been used in the war against the Persians; or, if there was any to spare, the different members of the league ought to have been allowed to send less. At first the Athenians seem really to have used it all on the war. At any rate, the other states in the league trusted them so thoroughly that many of them of their own accord asked to be allowed to send larger sums of money, instead of ships, men, and money, finding that this saved trouble, and even perhaps came cheaper. The Athenians agreed to this readily enough, and used the money, or some

of it, to fit out fresh fighting ships of their own, so that their fleet grew stronger and stronger, while some of the allies had no fighting fleets at all, or only very small ones. Two other things helped to make Athens the ruler of the league instead of only its leader. First, with the consent of the allies, the treasury of the league was moved from Delos, which was not a very safe place for such a great hoard of money, to Athens itself. And secondly, while Pericles was leader at Athens, Themistocles's plan of "keeping a grip on the sea" was carried out by building "Long Walls," as they were called, from Athens to Piræus and



PERICLES.

(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

Phalerum. These walls enclosed a V-shaped piece of ground, with Athens at the point of the V. The wall to Piræus was over four miles long, that to Phalerum a little shorter; and a second wall to Piræus, inside the V, was afterwards added, so that even if an enemy managed to land between Piræus and Phalerum, Athens would still not be cut off from the sea. At the time we are speaking of, and for many years before and after, there were no proper means of taking a strongly-walled place, unless there was time to starve it. You have heard how the great Miltiades failed before Paros, and there are many other instances of the same kind of thing happening. So that Athens was now almost as safe as if it stood on an island, particularly against the Spartans, who were more likely than any one else to attack Athens, but not at all likely to succeed in taking a place so strongly walled. As for starving Athens out, food could always come in by sea, as long as the Athenian fleet was stronger than any fleet that could come against it.

The other members of the Delian League now found that they had a ruler instead of a leader. They began to complain that the Athenians used the league money for their own purposes. The Athenians answered that as long as the allies were only paying what they had bargained to pay, and were really getting what they had bargained to get—namely, safety from Persia—it was no business of theirs to ask what became of the money. I daresay at Athens they really thought this quite a fair argument, but it would never have taken them in if they had been in the place of one of their own allies. Certainly the allies were not taken in. Some of them tried to leave the league, but the Athenians soon showed them that they would not allow that; and as they did not all try resisting Athens at once, those that did try were forced to submit again. It was after the islanders of Samos had tried to leave the league, and had been conquered and forced back into it by Pericles, that Elpinice, the sister of Cimon, speaking of Pericles, said that her

brother had won his famous victories over barbarians, and not, like this gentleman, over his fellow-Greeks. It is a pity that there were not more people who felt, like Elpinice, that it was wrong and unnatural for Athenians to be rejoicing at victories over other people who were as much Greeks as themselves.

Athens under Pericles.

Under the leadership of Pericles some things were done to make Athens more democratic than ever—not, indeed, to



THE ACROPOLIS IN THE TIME OF PERICLES.

help the half free aliens or the poor slaves, but to put the whole of the citizens as far as possible on an equal footing. First, the famous old court of Areopagus, the one oligarchic body left in Athens, had nearly all its power taken from it. Next, the citizens were paid for the time they spent in sitting as jurymen in the law courts. And lastly, poor citizens were allowed to get from the state the entrance money which they had to pay in order to get into the theatre.



THE PARTHENON AT THE PRESENT DAY.

Another thing Pericles did was to take up the work of making Athens beautiful, as Pisistratus had tried to make it beautiful in his time. The Acropolis, or citadel, was turned from a kind of castle, or place of strength, into a place of beauty, with a magnificent porch or entrance, and many glorious buildings and statues in it. The most famous building was the Parthenon, or virgin temple, sacred to Athena, the virgin goddess. This temple, though little more than a ruin now, is still one of the great sights of Athens. It was built by Ictinus, a famous architect, and ornamented by Phidias, a still more famous sculptor. Pericles raised many other fine buildings, both in the city and outside it.

And the age of Pericles was also the age of the great literary glory of Athens—the time, that is, in which great Athenian speakers and writers became famous all over Greece. Pericles himself was a great speaker, and nearly all the chief Athenian writers lived in the same century—Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the great writers of tragedies or serious plays; Aristophanes, the great writer of comedies or amusing plays; Thucydides, the wise historian of the Peloponnesian War; and others. Socrates, too, the best of the Greeks, and one of their greatest philosophers or thinkers, belongs to the same time, though he is known to us not from any writings of his own, but chiefly from those of Plato, one of the younger men in whose company he delighted. When you hear of people reading or acting a Greek play now, you may be sure that the play was written by one of the four Athenian play-writers named above, for no other Greek plays have come down to us complete, though we have fragments or scraps of plays by other writers. All the Greeks, and especially the Athenians, seem to have loved plays, and they looked on playgoing not merely as an amusement, but as a religious act, at which it was a duty as well as a pleasure to be present. Their plays were acted in great open-air theatres, made to hold very large audiences, and only on certain festivals, and always in the daytime.

Partly because Athens was now a democracy, in which the best man had always a chance to come to the front, partly because Pericles himself was a great man, and partly because other great men, like Themistocles and Aristides, had made the Athenian fleet strong, and won for Athens the leading place in the Delian League, we think of Athens under Pericles as the perfection of a Greek state. It was not perfect, but as near perfection as any Greek state ever came, and in some ways as near perfection as any state has ever come.

Yet towards the end of Pericles's life his fellow-citizens turned against him, and brought accusations against Phidias and other friends of his, and even against Pericles himself, declaring that they had broken the laws. There is little doubt that these accusations were untrue, for it seems that a free people can be just as ungrateful and unjust to a great man who is serving them as the most selfish emperor or king.

Per'ic-les

Elp-in-i'-ce

Ar-e-op'ag-us

Par'-then-on

Ic-ti'-nus

Phi'-di-as

Æs'-chyl-us

(ch like k)

Soph'-oc-les

Eu-rip'id-es

Ar-ist-oph'an-es

CHAPTER IX.

SPARTA AND ATHENS.—FIRST PART OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

Two Rival States.

THE Spartans had never given up their claim to be the foremost state in all Greece, but through Pausanias's misconduct they had lost the leadership in the sea war against Persia, and for a time they had enough to do to keep the leading position among the states of Peloponnesus. A severe earthquake, which laid their town in ruins and killed a great many of their citizens, led to a rising of the helots both in Messenia and in Laconia itself. These helots fortified themselves in Ithome, the old stronghold of the Messenians. Cimon persuaded the Athenians to send a force to help the Spartans, whom he had always admired; but as the Athenian soldiers were not able to take Ithome at once, the Spartans sent them home again without even thanking them. If the Athenians could not take Ithome with a rush, you may be very sure the Spartans could not, as it was a case of "wall fighting," and so the Messenian helots were able to hold out for some years, till at last the Spartans managed to starve them out. Even then they only surrendered on a promise that they should be allowed to go freely away; and the Athenians settled a number of them at Naupactus, which was now in their hands, knowing that they could count on them for help against the Spartans whenever they should need it. Some years after the earthquake the



quarrel between the Spartans and Athenians came to a head, and they met in battle at Tanagra in Boeotia.

As usually happened in land battles, the Spartans won, but they went home again without injuring the Athenians further, and at last a peace, or rather truce, for thirty years, was made between the two great rivals.

This truce actually lasted about fourteen years, and then came the great war, called the Peloponnesian

War, which was to decide whether Athens or Sparta was to be the leading state in Greece. By this truce the Athenians were left masters of the Delian League, including almost all of the island states in the Ægean and of the cities on its northern and eastern shores. Strong in their wealth, strong in their fleet, strong in their "grip of the sea," the Athenians seemed perhaps safer than they really were; for their allies were discontented, and they depended, as we do, on foreign corn to keep them from starving. This was owing to their very prosperity, which had led to such an increase of population that Attica could not produce corn enough to feed all its inhabitants; thus it was absolutely necessary for Athens to keep the mastery of the sea. The Spartans were left at the head of a league of Peloponnesian states; they were strong in their army and the armies of their allies, but, except Corinth, none of the Peloponnesian states had a strong fleet, and on the whole they had not much wealth. A third league was the Boeotian—friendly to Sparta and very unfriendly to Athens—at the head of which stood Thebes. A quarrel between Corinth and the western island of Corcyra brought on the great war, in which the Peloponnesian and Boeotian Leagues at length beat Athens and broke up the Delian League. But the real cause of the war was the jealousy between Sparta and Athens.

Corcyra.

The city of Corcyra, in the island of the same name, was a colony of Corinth. But, while most Greek colonies were

457

B.C.

445

B.C.

friendly to their mother states, Corcyra had never been able to get on with Corinth, and at last an open war broke out between them. The people of Corcyra asked the Athenians to help them, saying that if they did not, Corinth, with the help of the Peloponnesian League, would certainly win, and Corcyra would be forced to join the league; then the fleet of Corcyra, one of the largest in Greek waters, would be used against Athens in the war, which was sure to come sooner or later, between Athens and Sparta. As Pericles quite believed that the war would come, he advised the Athenians to make a defensive alliance with Corcyra—that is, to promise that Athens would not allow Corcyra to be conquered. This was done, though every one knew that it meant a war with the Peloponnesian League. The Corinthians at once persuaded their colony of Potidæa, on the north shore of the Ægean, which was a member of the Delian League, to revolt against Athens, and also applied to Sparta to head the Peloponnesian League in a war against the Athenians. The Spartan Assembly was just as ready for war as the Athenian Assembly had been, and it is worth observing how readily not only the leaders but the great body of the citizens in the two states went into the war; they little knew how much misery was before them both. The Athenians made haste to send an army to besiege Potidæa.

Plataea Attacked.

But we reckon the opening of the war from the spring of the next year, when the Thebans, in a dark
 431 night, made a sudden and treacherous attack on
 B.C. Plataea. In nearly every city of Greece there were two parties—an oligarchic party and a democratic (p. 69). Often the opposition—that is, the democratic party in an oligarchic state, or the oligarchic party in a democratic—hated the ruling party so bitterly that they were ready to do anything, no matter how much it injured the state, so long as it injured the ruling party as well. Plataea was still

in alliance with Athens, and, like most of the Athenian allies, was a democracy. To spite the party in power, some of the oligarchic party actually let their old enemies, the Thebans, into the town. But the river Asopus, which runs between Thebes and Plataea, suddenly rose during the night, after the advanced guard of the Thebans had crossed it, and before their main body had come up. This delayed the main body till daylight: and the Plataeans, finding that they had only a few hundred enemies to deal with, quietly got on their armour and attacked them. A few of the Thebans escaped from Plataea, but all the rest were either taken prisoners or killed. When the main body of the Thebans at last came up, they found the Plataeans quite ready for them, and were told that if they did not go away at once their friends who were now prisoners in Plataea would all be killed. They did go, and then the Plataeans killed the prisoners after all—a very stupid thing to do, as well as a very cruel one, for, once the prisoners were dead, they were of no more use to those who had taken them. So this unhappy war began with wrong-doing on both sides—treachery on the part of the Thebans, for they had attacked without declaring war; and senseless cruelty on the part of the Plataeans.

Invasion of Attica.

Soon after this a great Peloponnesian army marched into Attica. Pericles knew quite well that this would happen, and also that it was useless to try to beat the invaders in a battle, for the Athenians were only about one quarter as many as their enemies, and not such good fighting men on land. So he made the Athenians do very much what the Scots used to do ages after, when great English armies invaded Scotland—that is, retire before an enemy whom they were not strong enough to face in the open. The cattle were sent over to the neighbouring islands, and the people—men, women, and children, bond and free—came crowding into Athens, Piræus, and the space within the Long Walls.

The Peloponnesians did all the mischief they could, and Pericles found it very hard to keep the Athenians from marching out and getting beaten—as they certainly would have been—when they saw the enemy burning and destroying within a mile or two of the city. But as the Spartans and their allies had very little money, they could not afford to keep an army together for long, and after a few weeks their men had to go home. While they were still in Attica, Pericles had sent out ships to do all the mischief they could by attacking their enemies' coasts; and when the invaders were gone, he marched an army into the country of Megara, which belonged to the Spartan alliance, and did all the mischief he could there.

For several years this was the regular course of things: Attica was invaded in the early summer, and the Athenians sent out fleets to ravage their enemies' coasts, and, when their enemies had gone home again, made land attacks on the country of Megara. It seemed as if a war like this—causing waste and misery on both sides, but absolute ruin to neither—might go on for ever. No doubt what Pericles counted on was this—that it would go on for some years, and that then the poorer side would be unable to bear the expense of it any longer, and so would be forced to beg for peace. War, as you know, is terribly costly, and the richer side always has a good chance of beating the poorer.

War and Pestilence.

But war is also terribly uncertain: the wisest people cannot tell how it will go. In the second year of
430 the war, while the invaders were in Attica and
B.C. Athens was crowded with country people, a frightful plague, or destroying sickness, broke out in the city. In those days no one knew much about the causes of illnesses, but we know now that plagues are mainly caused by dirt, and if you crowd people together so that none of them have room enough, it is impossible to keep the crowded place

clean. It is always difficult to keep a town clean, but a town crowded as Athens then was, with people living not only in all the houses, but in every shed, outhouse, or other place where any kind of shelter could be found, simply could not be kept clean at all. The crowding caused dirt, and the dirt caused the plague; thousands of people took it, all suffered dreadfully, and at first hardly any got better. Many people think that fear is the great thing that keeps men from being wicked; but the truth is that fear quite as often makes people wicked, as is seen in every great plague and every panic. As in other places, so at Athens, when the plague was at its worst, terror made men selfish and reckless; the sick were left uncared for, the dead unburied, and all kinds of wickedness went on. No doubt there were brave people, then as always, who did their duty; but most people were quite overcome with terror, and thought only about escaping the plague themselves, or having a few hours of mad, wicked pleasure before the plague seized them. Read the accounts of the dreadful plague of London in 1665 A.D., or of any of the other great plagues that history tells of, and you will find that this is generally what happens at such times. The plague was very bad at Athens in the second and third years of the war; then it seemed to die away for about a year, but grew worse again, and raged for about one year more. Thousands of people died, not only in Athens itself, but elsewhere—for instance, in the Athenian camp before Potidea, to which the plague was brought by fresh troops arriving from Athens.

Death of Pericles.

But the greatest loss of all that the plague brought to Athens was the loss of Pericles. Two of his sons died of it; he took it himself, made a half recovery, and then died of the weakness that followed it. Quite at the end of his life the Athenians had begun to love and trust him again, as they had loved and trusted him for so

many years. When he lay dying, he told his friends that the thing he was proudest of was that no Athenian had ever put on mourning through him. He did not mean that he had never allowed wars to take place in which Athenians had been killed, but that he had never had any Athenian tried and executed as a traitor for opposing him in the management of the state. It shows how bitter the strife of parties must have been in Greece, that this should be a thing to boast of.

People sometimes say that "no man is necessary," meaning that, if a man dies, some one else can always be found to do his work well enough; but this is not always true. Pericles was certainly necessary to Athens, and after his death things went from bad to worse, for want of courage and prudence such as his.

Platæa again Attacked.

A little while before Pericles died, Potidæa surrendered to the Athenians; and about the time of his death the Spartans, Thebans, and their allies began to besiege little Platæa. All the old and helpless people were sent to Athens before the siege began, and only about five hundred fighting men, Platæans and Athenians, with a few women to cook and wash for them, were left in the town. For three months the enemy tried different ways of taking the place — by piling up a mound against the wall, battering the wall with rams, or setting the town on fire. But the Platæans undermined the mound to keep it from rising to the top of their wall, and, when this would not do, built a new half-moon-shaped wall inside their old wall and opposite the mound, so that, when the enemy reached the top of the old wall, they were still shut out of the town. The Platæans also managed to break the battering rams, and the fire went out without forcing the brave defenders to yield. So the besiegers saw that they would have to starve them out, and built a double wall all round the town, roofed over, so as to serve as barracks for their soldiers; and in this way, after

about two years' blockade, they got the place into their hands at last. But before that a very daring thing had been done by some of the besieged : over two hundred of them managed to make their escape in a dark and stormy night, using ladders to climb over their enemies' double wall, and so getting safe away to Athens, almost without the loss of a man. If you have heard much about the use of ladders in war, you will know how very often the ladders turn out to be too short ; but the sensible Plataeans had taken care to have their ladders the right length. The men who escaped not only saved themselves, but helped the others to hold out longer : for it was now a mere question of how long the food would last, and of course the fewer mouths there were to fill, the longer the supply held out. When the town did at last surrender, all the men in it were cruelly put to death in cold blood. The Athenians had meant to send help to Plataea ; but they never did, though some of their own men were in the place. If Pericles had lived longer, things might have been better managed.

Cleon.

But the leading man at Athens was now Cleon—a very different kind of man from Pericles. One of the worst dangers of a democracy is the danger of being guided by a man who is merely a skilful public speaker. A man may be that, of course, without being in the least a wise or good statesman ; and yet a man who has great skill in persuading the people by his speeches is sure to be powerful in a democracy, where the people can give power to any one that pleases them. Cleon was a skilful speaker—at least he succeeded in persuading people who had heard Pericles—but neither a wise statesman nor a good man ; and this is the very kind of man that leads a free state to ruin. Shortly before the surrender of Plataea he had nearly succeeded in persuading the Athenians to commit a more enormous act of cruelty than the Spartans and Thebans committed in murdering the Plataeans. The town of Mytilene, in the island



THE GULF OF CORINTH.

of Lesbos, revolted from Athens. After a long siege the Athenians took the town, because the poorer people, to whom the leaders of the revolt, hoping to get them to join in an attack on the besiegers, had served out suits of full armour, turned against the leaders, and so made it impossible for the town to hold out any longer. In spite of this, the wicked Cleon proposed that all the fighting men of Mytilene, including the very people who had really helped the Athenians to get back the town, should be put to death; and to this horrible proposal the Athenian Assembly agreed. But afterwards they were sorry, and next day the Assembly met again and voted not to kill them all. The first order had already been sent off, but a second ship was now dispatched, and great rewards were promised to the rowers if they reached Mytilene in time. This they just managed to do; but even the mercies of the Athenians were not very merciful, for, though they did not slaughter all the fighting men, they killed some hundreds of the party which had headed the revolt. Later on in the war, and after Cleon was dead, the Athenians did actually slaughter all the fighting men of the island of Melos; so that we cannot say that only Spartans and Thebans showed themselves cruel in this dreadful war.

Athenian Successes.

But the Athenians had better men among them than Cleon. Phormio, commanding their fleet in the Gulf of Corinth, won two splendid sea victories against great odds. He was able to do this because the Athenian oarsmen were far better trained than those of other Greek states, and could turn their ships this way and that, and ram the enemy's ships with their sharp prows. Other Greeks only thought of laying their ships alongside the enemys, and then letting the soldiers on board fight it out—a clumsy plan, which the Athenians despised, calling it “land fighting at sea.” Another excellent commander, Demosthenes, after winning two battles in the wild country of the north-

west, made a little fort at the north end of Pylos Bay, in Messenia, the building of which led to the most surprising event in the whole war. Of course the Spartans came to take the fort, and, being Spartans, of course they failed to take it with a rush. In the attempt, Brasidas, the best officer the Spartans had in all this war, was severely wounded, and lost his shield, which, to his great vexation, the Athenians hung up on a trophy, or monument of victory.

The mouth of Pylos Bay is nearly blocked by a long island called Sphacteria. On this island the Spartans now placed some four hundred heavy-armed infantry, thinking in this way to prevent the Athenians from bringing help to Demosthenes. But, before they had blocked up the entrances to the bay, at each end of the island, an Athenian fleet sailed in, easily defeated the Spartan ships in the bay, and so turned the tables completely. Demosthenes was now safe, and the Spartans on the island in great danger. Now in a Greek army even private soldiers were often people of great importance. We hear of men serving as private soldiers in the heavy-armed infantry after they had held the highest posts in the government. So the Spartans, rather than lose four hundred heavy-armed soldiers, were willing to make peace on very good terms for Athens.

If Pericles had been alive, no doubt peace would have been made; but Cleon would not hear of making peace on any reasonable terms; and so, after a short truce, the wretched war went on again. But the Athenians dreaded coming to close quarters with heavy-armed Spartan infantry, so they simply tried to starve out the men on the island. The Spartans, by offering great rewards, got small boats and even swimmers to "run the blockade" at night, and land food on the island, and it seemed as if this might go on for ever. Cleon, at Athens, got so angry at this that he said in the Assembly that the Athenian officers were managing things all wrong, and that, if only he were sent there, he would soon make the Spartans prisoners.

Then Nicias, the leader of the party opposed to Cleon, got up and proposed that they really should send him, thinking that he would be sure to fail, and so lose all his power. This was very wrong, but also very natural; for the worst of what we call "party government" is that even a good man like Nicias, in the excitement of trying to get the better of the opposite party, sometimes forgets what is best for the state. Cleon at first tried to back out of going, but when he found that the people began to jeer at him, he said he would go. When he reached Pylos, he insisted that the Athenians must land troops on the island at once; and Demosthenes, pouring his men into it, drove the poor Spartans, after many had been killed, to surrender. All Greece was astonished: the Athenians had won by sheer weight of numbers; but ever since Thermopylæ it had been believed that, though you might kill Spartans, you never could make them surrender, no matter what the odds of numbers were. The year after this, the Athenians, mightily pleased with their success at Pylos, marched a land army into Bœotia, and were beaten near Delium, 424
B.C. a place sacred to Apollo; and in the same year with this battle of Delium the Spartans made the cruel slaughter of the poor helots of which you have heard already (p. 62).

An Unwise General.

A wise man is made wiser even by his failures, and a fool more foolish even by his successes. After the taking of the Spartans on the island, Cleon supposed himself to be a great general, and made up his mind to go and win back Amphipolis, a town on the river Strymon, in the north, which had lately been taken by Brasidas. After recovering from the wound he got at Pylos, Brasidas had made a wonderful land march through a part of Greece most unfriendly to Sparta, and had suddenly seized Amphipolis, before Thucydides, the great historian, commanding the Athenian forces in the north, could stop him. For this failure

Thucydides was banished ; and Cleon, getting orders to sail for the north, reached Eion, at the mouth of the Strymon, and there waited till all should be ready for the attack on Amphipolis.

Now the citizen soldiers of Athens, as they were used to find fault with their rulers in the Assembly at home, easily fell into the very bad habit of grumbling at their commanders in war. But as Cleon was used to managing them at home by attending to their complaints, or pretending to do so, when they began to grumble about being kept at Eion doing nothing, he led them up towards Amphipolis, with no clear plan in his own mind of what he was going to do, but simply hoping to silence the grumblers. This kind of thing will not do in war.

After halting his men near Amphipolis, Cleon found that Brasidas was watching him from inside the town. This alarmed him, and he began to retreat, leading his men past the town again, with their right sides towards it. Now Greek heavy-armed infantry did not much mind an attack from in front, or from their own left, because their left sides were defended by their great shields ; but an attack from behind, or from the right side—that is, the unshielded side—was a far more serious matter, especially to men who only half trusted their commander. So the Athenians began to grow uneasy, and Brasidas saw this. “Look !” he cried. “Those men will never stand ; see how their spears wag !” So he had the gates flung open ; and his men, rushing out in three streams, fell on the right flank of the Athenians. Almost as soon as Brasidas’s men touched them, the Athenians fell into confusion. Cleon and many Athenians were killed, and the rest fled towards Eion. Brasidas himself fell at the head of his men, though very few others were killed on his side. Not only was Brasidas one of the bravest of the Spartans, but, very unlike most Spartans, he made himself loved, and not hated, by Greeks of other states who had to obey him. The people of Amphipolis, instead of hating

him as a conqueror, actually worshipped his memory, as if he had been the founder of their city, just as there are still natives of India who worship the memory of the brave John Nicholson.

Brasidas and Cleon, so unlike in every other way, were like each other in this, that they both wished the war to go on. Now that they were dead, a peace, or rather a truce, was made, called Nicias's Peace, as he arranged the terms of it, which was meant to last for fifty years. 421
B.C.
Unhappily, though the Spartans and Athenians stopped invading each other's country for some time, they were soon fighting each other again elsewhere, so that the truce did very little good. Ten years of war had not taught either side the value of peace.

I-tho'-me

As-o'-pus

De-mos'-then-es

De'-li-um

Tan'-ag-ra

My-til-e'-ne

Sphac-ter'-i-a

Am-phil'-ol-is

Pot-id-æ'-a

Phor'-mi-o

Ni'-ci-as

E'-i-on

CHAPTER X.

THE LATTER PART OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR. THE DOWNFALL OF ATHENS.

Alcibiades.

THE truth is that there was a much finer gentleman than Cleon now at Athens, ready to take up Cleon's mischievous work. Alcibiades was young, rich, of noble descent, able and brave, ambitious and agreeable—exactly



ALCIBIADES.

(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

the kind of man that, a hundred years or so before, might have made himself into the better kind of Greek tyrant. Pericles had been his guardian, Socrates his friend, and he had everything in his favour, except that he had not learned, and never did learn, that every man has a duty to do, which must be done, even if he dislikes it. Alcibiades broke the laws, and people only

laughed; he led Athens back into war, and the Athenians followed him with light hearts; he turned traitor to Athens, then turned back again, and was forgiven; almost to the end of his life he was like a spoiled child.

Soon after Nicias's peace was made, the old quarrel between

Sparta and Argos broke out again. Alcibiades played a trick on the Spartans, something like the trick once played by Themistocles (p. 110), but entirely without the excuse which Themistocles had had, and then persuaded the Athenians to make alliance with Argos. This practically started the Peloponnesian War again, which was what Alcibiades wished, for he felt sure that he would distinguish himself in the war, as he undoubtedly did.

War Renewed.

A battle soon took place, called the first battle of Mantinea, in which the forces of Athens, Argos, and some other states met those of Sparta and Tegea. As it was a land battle, naturally the Spartan side won.

418
B.C.

Greek heavy infantry, in advancing to battle, were always apt to edge off to their own right, because they were trying to keep their shields, which were on their left sides, between them and the enemy. At Mantinea both sides did this, and King Agis, who was commanding the Spartans, seeing that his left wing would be outflanked or overlapped by the enemy's right, made it move more to the left, which opened a gap between it and the centre. This was a bad mistake, and the enemy overlapped his left wing at both ends, and beat it completely. But Agis's right wing had outflanked his enemy's left in much the same way; there was no gap, it is true, in this line, but their left wing was beaten, and the Spartan private soldiers fought so well that they finally won the battle. After this the old respect for the Spartans, which had been so much weakened by their surrender in the island of Sphacteria, grew strong again.

Expedition to Sicily.

Next Alcibiades did his country a greater mischief. We have not mentioned the Greeks in Sicily for some time, but I may tell you that, in the year in which the Persians were beaten at Salamis, the Greeks

480
B.C.

in Sicily beat the Carthaginians at Himera. Since then they had been going on much as the Greeks in the old country did, making wars and alliances among themselves, and sometimes asking help from overseas. Early in the Peloponnesian War the Athenians had been asked to interfere in Sicily, and had done so, but not to much purpose. It was in the course of one of these earlier expeditions to Sicily that Demosthenes had made his little fort at Pylos (p. 132). Soon after the battle of Mantinea the Athenians were again asked to interfere in Sicily, and Alcibiades strongly urged them to do so. He thought that they could easily conquer Syracuse, make themselves masters of all Sicily, ruin the trade of Corinth with the West, and perhaps cross into Africa and conquer Carthage; and he told the people enough of his plans to make them eager to try what could be done.

A great fleet was prepared, thousands of soldiers were to go on board, all kinds of stores were supplied in abundance, and Alcibiades himself was to go as one of the three commanders. Athens had never sent out so large an expedition so thoroughly well equipped. Yet in one respect the force was a weak one; it included hardly any cavalry, and the want of a good body of cavalry was one of the main causes that led to the failure of the enterprise.



ANCIENT
STATUE
OF
HERMES.

An Ominous Beginning.

All the town was excited and full of hope, when a very strange and disheartening thing occurred. All over Athens there were short pillars, with their upper parts carved into the shape of a man's head and shoulders; these statues, or half-statues, stood for Hermes, the god of luck. In one night almost every one of these figures was knocked out of shape by some mischievous hands. This both shocked and frightened the

Athenians very much ; it was an act of impiety against the gods and of undutifulness towards the state—the very thing, as they thought, to bring bad luck to the great expedition just ready to start. Nobody, people said, was wild or reckless enough to do such a deed but Alcibiades. In reality it is far more likely that Alcibiades's enemies did it, knowing that he would get the blame. As an innocent man should, Alcibiades begged to be put on his trial at once ; but his enemies said they had no proof as yet, so he had to start for Sicily with a dreadful suspicion hanging over his head.

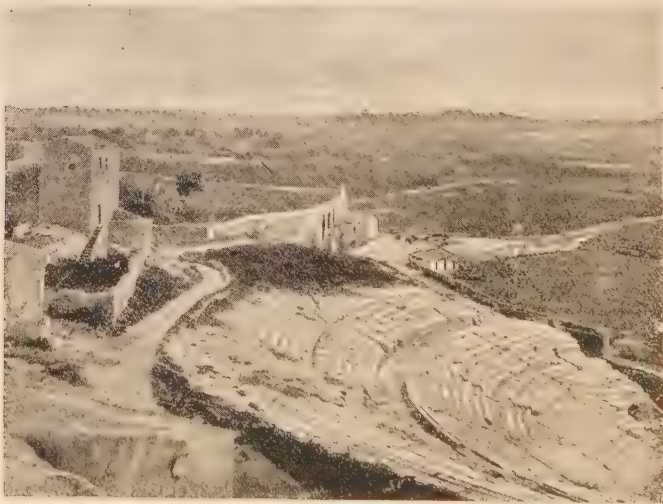
After solemn prayers and sacrifice, the great fleet left the harbour. It would have been a good thing for Athens if every ship had sunk and every man been drowned before they were clear of the Saronic Gulf. To spend their best strength in a distant expedition like this, with the war against Sparta still on their hands, was no better than madness. Suppose they had succeeded in Sicily to the very top of their hopes, they might have been ruined at home all the same.

The fleet reached Sicily, but, before the real attack on Syracuse was even begun, an officer arrived to arrest Alcibiades. He was to go home and be tried for destroying the images of Hermes, and also for another foolish act of impiety, of which he very likely may really have been guilty. Whether he was guilty or not, people at Athens were now violently excited against him ; and it was almost certain that, if he did go home, he would be put to death. So on the way home he slipped away from the officer, and soon after went to Sparta, to offer his services against his own country. The Athenians had him laid under a solemn curse and condemned to death, but Alcibiades was more angry than frightened. "I will let them know," he said, "that I am still alive." The Spartans, by his advice, sent off a good officer to Sicily, to show the Syracusans how to resist the Athenians, and seized Decelea, in Attica, where they placed a body of soldiers to be a constant danger to Athens.

415
B.C.

Syracuse Besieged.

In the meantime, Nicias and Lamachus, the two Athenian officers left in command in Sicily, began the attack on Syracuse. After wasting some time in doing things that were almost useless, they seized the high ground which joins Syracuse to the mainland of Sicily, and began building a wall across it. They also brought their fleet round into the great



SYRACUSE AND ITS AMPHITHEATRE.

(From a Photograph.)

harbour of Syracuse; thus they hoped to cut the Syracusans off from help both by land and by sea. The Syracusans did all they could to hinder the Athenians from building this wall, and in the fighting Lamachus was killed. So Nicias, who had started as one of three commanders, was now left to command the besieging force alone. He was a good and honourable man, but a poor general. When Gylippus, the officer sent from Sparta to help Syracuse, reached Sicily, he

found that the Athenians had not yet finished their wall ; so he gathered troops, and, by a sudden march, passed the unfinished wall and got into Syracuse before the Athenians could stop him. Encouraged by him, the Syracusans marched out, took a fort which the Athenians had built on the high ground, and drove them down on to the low ground close to the great harbour. Nicias, who was very ill, now wrote home saying that he must at once have help, and a great deal of help, or Syracuse would never be taken. It would have been better if he had gone straight home with all his ships and men ; but if he had, the Athenians would almost certainly have punished him, perhaps with death. Next Gylippus persuaded the Syracusans to launch their warships, which hitherto they had been afraid to do. The Athenian ships had been lying for months on an open beach. Many of them were leaky, and many of the rowers had deserted. In the first sea-fight the Syracusans were beaten, but they beat the Athenians in a land-fight which took place at the same time. After this they made the bows of their ships shorter and stronger, and fought the Athenians again. Perhaps in the open sea the Athenians might have won by their greater skill in turning their ships about ; but the fight was in the great harbour, where there was no room for this : the ships met bow to bow, and the stronger rams of the Syracusans won.

Disaster.

Demosthenes now arrived with help from Athens. He saw at once that the Athenians must either take the high ground above Syracuse again, or else sail away before they were hopelessly blocked in. A night attack on the high ground was tried, but it failed, and many of the Athenians fell over the cliffs and were killed. Beaten and disheartened, and many of them suffering from fever, the Athenians were no longer fit to face an enemy, and Demosthenes insisted that they must sail home at once. Then came an eclipse of the moon ; and Nicias, just as if he had been a Spartan,

believed the seers who told him it would be unlucky to start yet. But the Syracusans, seeing that their enemies were now only thinking of escaping, resolved to have a full revenge, and another fierce fight in the great harbour ended in the Athenians being completely blocked in. The only remaining chance—if it can be called a chance—was to try to get away by land. A few escaped in this way ; but Nicias, Demosthenes, and almost the whole Athenian army were forced, after suffering dreadful misery, to surrender. The two leaders suffered death, and the rest were treated with such cruelty that many of them also died ; finally, those of them that were still alive were sold as slaves. So ended the

413 wildest and most reckless enterprise which Athens
 B.C. had ever undertaken. Nicias was a good man, and one cannot help being sorry for him ; yet his slowness and stupidity caused, if not the failure, the ruin of the expedition. It would perhaps have failed in any case.

Trouble in Athens.

After this dreadful blow the Athenians showed themselves really brave. The Spartans were at Decolea, only a few miles from Athens ; the ablest of the Athenians was now on the enemy's side, and a great fleet and thousands of fighting men had been lost. But they set to work to build fresh ships, and a great sum of money—a thousand talents which Pericles had set aside, only to be used if Attica was attacked by sea, was taken to pay for the new fleet. Romans could have done no better.

But the allies of Athens had never forgotten their old grievances, and to these a new one had been added, for in the seventh year of the war the Athenians had doubled the payments which the other members of the Delian League had to make ; so they now began to revolt one after another. In consequence of this the chief fighting was now on the east side of the Ægean Sea, and first the Spartans and then the Athenians humbled themselves to their old enemies

the Persians, in the hope of getting help from them. Alcibiades, who had been the most luxurious man at Athens, had been trying to be one of the hardiest and roughest at Sparta; but he grew tired of this, and knowing that the Spartans would never trust a man who had turned traitor to his own city, he went off to Tissaphernes, Persian governor of Lydia, on the east side of the Ægean Sea. He tried to persuade the Persian to help Athens, and the Athenians to change their government from a democracy to an oligarchy in order to please the Persian. This they actually did, and for a few months a body called the "Four Hundred" had all the power at Athens. But the main body of the Athenian fleet and army, then at Samos, would have nothing to do with the Four Hundred, who managed things so badly that they soon lost their power in Athens itself, and the old democracy was set up again. Meanwhile, Alcibiades, who only cared to get back to Athens somehow or other, made friends with the Athenians of the democratic party at Samos, who took him as one of their leaders.

The Beginning of the End.

The Athenians were no longer so immensely the stronger side at sea as they had been when the war began. Their best ships were destroyed, many of their best oarsmen had deserted, been taken prisoners, or been killed, and yet they were bound to prevent their enemies from blocking up the Hellespont. For through the Hellespont came the ships that brought corn to Athens from the Black Sea coast, and if this supply failed the city would starve. Twice they beat their enemies in or near the Hellespont, and as these victories were in great part won by Alcibiades, he felt at last that it would be safe to return to Athens. They received him there not only with forgiveness, but with thanks and praise. The sentence against him was reversed—that is it was declared that he was not to be put to death or lose his citizen rights—and it was settled that he should

go on commanding against the enemy. But soon after this the Athenians were beaten at sea, through the folly of one of Alcibiades's officers. Though Alcibiades himself was not there, and though his express orders had been disobeyed, the Athenians cast all the blame on him and took away his command. He left Athens once more, and went to live in the Thracian Chersonese, where he had property.

Fall of Athens.

The rest of the war may be told very shortly. Near
 406 Lesbos the Athenians gained one more sea victory,
 B.C. called the battle of Arginusæ. After this battle the
 officers in command were accused of neglect of duty
 in not saving the crews of their own disabled ships when the
 fight was over. Six of them were tried, found guilty, and
 put to death. Whether they were guilty or not, the
 Athenians were guilty of murdering them: for their law
 said plainly that in all such cases men could only be tried
 one at a time. The Athenians broke this law, and tried and
 condemned the six commanders all together. One of the six
 officers thus unlawfully condemned was Pericles, son of the
 famous Pericles. There was only one more battle in the
 405 war, the sea battle of Ægospotami, in the Helles-
 B.C. pont. The Athenians let themselves be surprised,
 though Alcibiades, who was living near Ægospot-
 ami, saw the danger and gave them warning. They were
 totally defeated, and lost almost all their ships. The Hellespont
 was blocked, the corn ships could not come through, and the
 last hope of Athens was gone. A ship brought the fatal news
 to Piræus in the evening, and the sound of crying went up by
 way of the Long Walls from the harbour town to the city.
 "That night," says an Athenian historian, "no one slept."

The Athenians still held out for a little while, but, with
 404 no allies—for they had now lost them all—and no
 B.C. corn coming in, they could only submit at last.
 All the Athenian warships but twelve were taken

away or destroyed, and the walls of Piræus and the Long Walls broken down. In the twenty-eighth year of the war, the sovereign city, mistress of the sea and of so many lesser states, was left helpless and without a friend. But for the Long Walls the Athenians could not have held out so long, but no walls could save them when once they had lost their "grip of the sea."

In this most unhappy war many cruel and wicked things were done on both sides. One of its worst results was that it led both Spartans and Athenians to ask help of Persia. Callicratidas, a gallant Spartan who was killed at Arginusæ, had cursed "the necessities of the Greeks which led them to flatter the barbarians." But still the great body of Greeks do not seem to have understood that wars among themselves were really civil wars, and that asking foreigners to interfere in them was certain to end in the loss of Greek freedom.

Al-cib-i'-ades

Teg'-e-a

Hi'-mer-a

De-cel-e'-a

Tiss-aph-ern'-es

Ly'-di-a

Ar-gin-u'-sæ

Æ-gos-pot'-am-i

Call-ic-rat'-id-as

CHAPTER XI.

THE DAYS OF THE GREATNESS OF THEBES. EPAMINONDAS.

Athens still Supreme in some Ways.

ATHENS never won back its old position. The Delian League was broken up, and no one doubted now that Sparta was the strongest state in Greece. But it cannot be said that the Spartans used their power at all better than the Athenians had used theirs. They were, as you would expect, harsh masters, and, except in war, they never did anything to make the other Greeks proud of them. Athens, on the other hand, had been great not only in power, but in all the arts that make life delightful. And even now, though the power of Athens was lost, the charm of Athens remained, and it was still the foremost city in these arts. And later, when the differences of Greek were dying out, and all educated Greeks spoke alike, it was the Greek of Athens that they tried to speak.

Aleibiades, soon after the downfall of Athens, hit upon a new plan to make himself important. He was on his way to the Persian court, where he hoped, no doubt, to play a leading part, when he was attacked and murdered. He was a very good fighting man, and had great ability though far too little prudence as a statesman; but he had ruined himself, and done very much to ruin Athens, by utter want of conscience. It happened to Aleibiades, as it has to other men, good and bad, that a woman was the last friend he

had: he had been kind to her—or she thought he had—and she wrapped his dead body in some clothes of her own, and gave him the best burial she could.

Socrates.

A much greater man than Alcibiades, though I have only mentioned him once or twice, was his friend Socrates, the best of all the Greeks. He was older than Alcibiades, but he had always spent much of his time in talking to men younger than himself, and trying to persuade them to lead good and reasonable lives; for, as he truly said, to be good and to be reasonable are really the same thing. There were plenty of men in Greece, called Sophists, who were ready to give regular lectures to the young, and many of them grew rich by charging fees for their lectures. Socrates would not give regular lectures, and thought it wrong to take fees; so he remained a poor man all his life, though he could easily have made himself rich. He served the state both as a



SOCRATES.

(Visconti, *Iconographie grecque*.)

soldier and a citizen, and showed his courage in battle, and also by opposing those in power when they were doing wrong; for instance, he risked his life by opposing the unlawful trial of the generals after Arginusæ (p. 144). But he spent a great part of his life in talking, and was perhaps the best and most interesting talker that ever lived. He must, one would think, have enjoyed life greatly, though he once said a strange thing himself—that almost the happiest part of a man's life was when he was fast asleep and not even dreaming. But whether he enjoyed life or not, he knew how to lay it down when the time came. Athens had been

beaten, and, after many troubles, a revolution had restored the old democracy again, when Socrates, now an old man, was accused of impiety and of influencing young men in a bad way. He was found guilty and condemned to death. This was as wicked a piece of work as ever was done in the name of justice. It is true that some of the young men who had been most with him had turned out badly, like Alcibiades. It is also true that, though he kept all the customs which the religion of the Athenians required, he told his fellow-citizens that many of their stories about the gods were false and wicked. But it is most false that he was an irreligious man, or that he taught young men wickedness. He was the most religious man in all Greece, and took the most trouble to teach young people what was right. He was, in fact, a martyr, just as much as any Hebrew prophet or Christian saint. The Athenians murdered him because they hated to hear him trying to persuade them to do what they did not choose to do, though they knew it was right.

When he was in prison under sentence of death, his friends made arrangements for him to escape; but he said he would not do that, because it would be breaking the law. When the day came, he quietly drank the hemlock

399 --the poison used at Athens for executing people
B.C. condemned to death--and so died the best man that
Greece ever had.

Besides being the best of all the Greeks, Socrates was also one of their greatest thinkers or philosophers, and perhaps the first man in the world that ever found out how much trouble one has to take in order to say exactly what one means. It was partly because he took so much trouble over this that he was such a good talker.

Disciples of Socrates.

Of all the younger men who had listened to his words, the one that understood him best was Plato, and it is from

Plato's beautiful "Dialogues," or conversations, that most of our knowledge of Socrates comes. Plato was not only the man that understood Socrates best, but was also, as you would expect, a great philosopher or thinker himself.

Another of the followers of Socrates was Xenophon, a very different kind of man from Plato, for he was a soldier as well as a scholar. He joined a Greek force which was half deceived and half coaxed by a Persian prince, called Cyrus the Younger, into helping him in an attack on his brother, the King of Persia. After a long march from the coast of the Ægean into the heart of Persia, Cyrus's army met the immensely larger army of the king; Cyrus was killed in the battle, and his Asiatic troops were beaten, but the Greeks beat those of the king's men who were opposed to them. After the battle the Persians tried to frighten or coax them into laying down their arms. They said they would keep their arms, but would retire peacefully from the country if the king would deal fairly with them. This he promised to do, but soon after nearly all their generals were treacherously murdered while visiting the Persian camp.

Retreat of the Ten Thousand.

For one night the Greeks gave way to despair; but before morning, Xenophon, who was quite young and only serving as a volunteer, went round to the officers who were left, and begged them to try what they could do. The men were called together; they chose new officers, of whom Xenophon was one, and set about fighting their way out of their enemies' country. They could not return the way they had come, for the great rivers Tigris and Euphrates lay behind them, which their enemies would never have let them cross. So they struck away to the north, and, though they did not know the way, had great difficulty in getting food, and suffered dreadfully from the cold in the mountains, they succeeded, after a most astonishing march, in reaching the Black Sea coast through Armenia. When they saw the great water

stretching before them, the weary Greeks knew they were saved, and burst into a great shout of "The sea! the sea!" The whole march, advance and retreat together, took about fifteen months. Xenophon, who really managed the retreat, wrote an account of it, and a most excellent tale of adventure you will find it. Three things are specially to be noted about this remarkable retreat. First, the men who carried it through were not a national army, fighting for Athens or Sparta, Thebes or Corinth, but a set of mercenaries, mere soldiers of fortune, gathered from all parts of Greece, and fighting for their own safety. Secondly, it is doubtful whether any soldiers then in the world except Greeks—who were citizens as well as soldiers—would have had the sense to choose fresh officers and then obey them. Thirdly, the successful retreat of the "Ten Thousand," as they were called, showed to all Greece how feeble the great Persian kingdom really was, and set the Greeks wondering whether they could not conquer Persia once and for all.

Supremacy of Sparta.

The Spartans were for a while engaged in war with the Persians, but, far from conquering Persia, they agreed at last to a very disgraceful peace, by which the Greek
 387 cities in Asia—most of which had been free from
 B.C. the Persian rule for the last ninety years—had to submit to Persia once more. The terms of this peace show how little the Spartans cared for Greece as a whole. Athens at the worst had never done anything as bad as this.

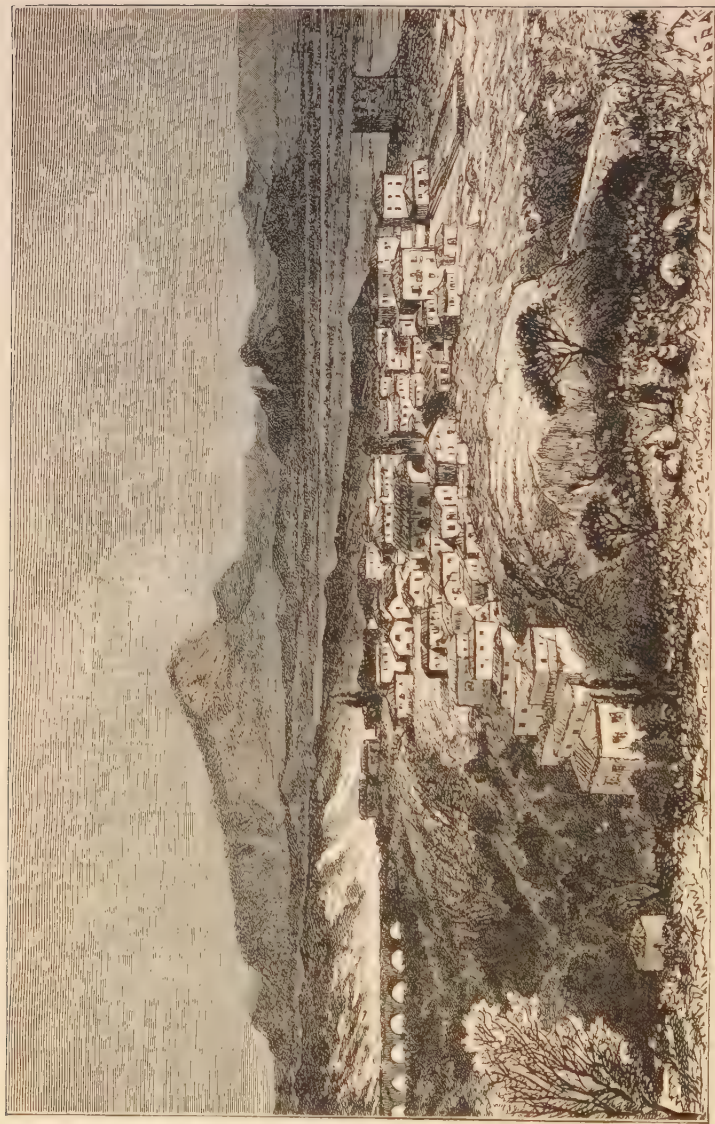
But still the Spartans were the leaders in old Greece, though they certainly were not now leaders of whom the other Greeks could be proud: as for liking them, I suppose the Spartans themselves scarcely expected to be liked. You will remember how some of the oligarchic party at Platæa had tried to betray their city to the Thebans at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War (p. 124). Many things like this happened in ancient Greece, for in the little Greek

states the opposite parties hated each other to a degree which, happily for us, we can hardly now understand. Five years after Sparta made peace with Persia, Thebes was itself betrayed to the Spartans in much the same way. A Theban who hated the ruling party in his city managed, on a feast-day, to let a Spartan army, which was supposed to be marching peacefully through Boeotia, into the citadel of Thebes. Before the rest of the Thebans could get on their armour—indeed, before they understood what was happening—their town was taken. There was no war at the time between Sparta and Thebes, so that this was treachery of the worst kind. For three years the Spartans were masters of Thebes, and then they lost the town almost as suddenly as they had won it.

382
B.C.

Pelopidas.

A number of Thebans belonging to the party opposed to Sparta had had to leave Thebes, and were now living in exile. One of these, named Pelopidas—a brave man, who loved his country, but was reckless about the means he used to free it—contrived a plot for murdering the leading Thebans of the Spartan party and setting Thebes free. He and his friends came secretly to Thebes from Athens, where they had been living, and, disguising themselves as women, attacked these leaders one evening after dinner, and killed them. One of those who were murdered, named Archias, had received a letter in the middle of dinner which was meant to warn him of his danger, but he would not open it. “Business to-morrow,” said he, and these words of his became a proverb among the Greeks. Though Pelopidas did what he did to free his country, it was none the less a treacherous murder. Perhaps if the Athenians had not been so fond of singing about Harmodius and Aristogiton (p. 77), other Greeks would not have been so ready to commit crimes in freedom’s name. There was one Theban—the best of them all, Epaminondas—who would have nothing to do with this



THERES AT THE PRESENT DAY.

horrible piece of work. But when it was over, and the citizens began to think of trying to drive the Spartans out of the citadel, Epaminondas was the first man to buckle on his armour; for it was not danger, but dishonour, that he feared. After three or four days the Spartans agreed to march out of the citadel and go home, and Thebes was free once more. Of course war followed between Thebes and Sparta, and, eight years after the freeing of Thebes, the Spartans and their allies, who had invaded Boeotia, **371** were defeated by Epaminondas at the battle of **B.C.** Leuctra.

Epaminondas and his Tactics.

As Epaminondas invented a new way of winning battles, you should try to understand what his way was. You have heard (p. 89) that an ordinary Greek army in battle array consisted of some thousands of heavy-armed infantry, drawn up in three oblong blocks, or rather in one long block of three divisions, every man standing as close as he could to his neighbour. The length of the line would be, if possible, not less than that of the enemy's, and the depth would vary—usually from eight to sixteen men. Any cavalry they had would be posted at the two ends of the line, or else put in front; they, or the light-armed infantry, would begin the battle, and join in the pursuit if their side won, but neither really counted for much in a battle. It was the heavy-armed infantry who decided the battles by sheer hard pushing. Now, before Epaminondas's time, it seems that the Thebans sometimes tried to get an advantage in pushing by forming up their men very deep; for instance, at the battle of Delium (p. 133) the Thebans were twenty-five men deep, their enemies only eight, and this had a good deal to do with the Theban victory there. Perhaps this gave Epaminondas the hint for his new plan.

He knew that the Spartans would take the right wing—the post of honour—in the army which he had to fight, and

that if once the Spartans were beaten, the rest of their side would be disheartened, and give way at once. So he formed up the left wing of his heavy-armed infantry so that it was fifty men deep and only a few men wide, and kept his centre and right wing in the usual order. Then he marched up to the enemy, not with a single straight front to his whole army, but with the centre rather farther back than the left wing, and the right wing farther back still.

The Battle of Leuctra.

To start with, his cavalry beat the enemy's cavalry, for Spartan cavalry were never good for much. Then his deep and narrow left wing of infantry rushed right into the enemy's right wing of infantry—the Spartan citizen soldiers, who stood only twelve deep—and tore its way through by sheer weight and strength in shoving. Afterwards his centre, and later still his right wing, came up, but they found they had very little to do; for, exactly as Epaminondas had reckoned, when once the Spartan citizens were seen to be in confusion, the rest of the Spartan side gave up and retreated in a hurry.

This kind of attack, called the “oblique attack,” was invented by Epaminondas. In spite of the great changes in warfare made since his time, mainly owing to the invention of gunpowder, the same kind of attack was most successfully used by Frederick the Great of Prussia in his wars a hundred and fifty years ago. If you do not understand how it worked merely by reading this account, draw a plan of it for yourself on a piece of paper, and I think you will understand it then; only do not forget that when two armies are face to face, they are just like two men standing face to face, and the right of the one is opposite the left of the other.

This day of Leuctra was a bitter day for the Spartans; they and their friends had been beaten in a land fight in the open by a smaller army than their own. Since Sparta

had been a great fighting power, such a thing had never happened before; the Spartans had lost their position as leaders among the Greeks, and never won it back.

Supremacy of Thebes.

Thebes was now the leading city in Greece. Epaminondas and Pelopidas were great friends, though Epaminondas never can have approved of the treacherous means which Pelopidas used at the beginning of the struggle for the freedom of Thebes. The two friends had their hands full, and were fighting sometimes in the north and sometimes in the south. The Thebans were now the attacking party, and the Spartans had to try to defend Laconia against them. Epaminondas helped the Arcadians to found a new city, called Megalopolis, to threaten the Spartans from the north; he also restored the old city of Messene, long since destroyed by the Spartans, to threaten them from the west. In Messene he settled as many as he could find of the descendants of the old Messenians, knowing that he could trust them not to forget their ancient quarrel with Sparta. Twice he attacked the city of Sparta itself; but though Sparta, unlike other Greek cities, had no wall, and though Epaminondas both times fought his way right into the streets, both times the Spartans, by sheer hard fighting, drove him out again.

After the death of Pelopidas, who was killed fighting in Thessaly, Epaminondas gained one more victory over the Spartans, and lost his life in the battle. He used the same "oblique attack," the same deep mass of infantry flung on the enemy's right, in this second battle of Mantinea, that had worked such wonders at Leuctra.

It succeeded again, but Epaminondas himself was thrust through with a pike as he led his men on. He fainted, and was carried out of the battle. When he came to, he asked first if his shield was safe, and was told that it was; then whether the Thebans were winning, and was told that they



RUINS OF THE WALLS OF MESSENE.

were. He next asked for two officers by name, one after the other ; and being told that they were both dead, "You had better make peace, then," said he. After that he bade them draw the pikehead out of his wound, and so died. He was a great statesman, and it is very much to his

honour that the Thebans sometimes complained that he cared more for Greece than for Thebes. It would have been a good thing for Greece, and therefore for the separate Greek states, if there had oftener been occasion to make such a complaint against Greek statesmen. He was also one of the few soldiers who have not only won battles, but invented a new and effective way of winning them. As you have heard, Frederick the Great, two thousand years later, borrowed Epaminondas's invention, and found it still useful.

Epaminondas and Pelopidas had made Thebes great between them; they were the only really great men Thebes ever had, except Pindar the poet; and with the death of Epaminondas the greatness of Thebes passed away. First Sparta, then Athens, then Sparta again, and lastly, for a short time, Thebes, had been the leading states in Greece. But no one of them had ever made Greece one, had ever joined the many lively little states into one great state strong enough to last for ages. It was the Romans who first showed Europe how that could be done.

Xen'oph-on (*x* like *z*)
Eu-phra'tes

Pel-op'id-as
Arch-i-as (*ch* like *k*)

Leuc'tra

CHAPTER XII.

MACEDON AND ROME.—THE END.

Lights and Shadows.

YOU remember the old saying, "The Greeks are always children." The more you read Greek history the truer, I think, you will find that saying to be. Sometimes they were like brave, good, and sensible children, sometimes like foolish and quarrelsome children. When the Persians tried to conquer them, they stood up to the Persians like brave boys facing a big bully ; but, take them on the whole, they never were serious enough or steady enough for long together : they were brave for a little while, sensible for a little while, and then cowards or fools again. And so, when a more manly enemy than the Asiatics came against them, they were beaten, and lost the freedom, or power of governing themselves, which they had valued so much.

Yet their very conquerors learned a great deal from them. The Macedonians, the first people that conquered them, were a kind of half Greeks themselves, and helped to spread the Greek language, Greek thought, and Greek civilization over large parts of the world of which the free Greeks had never had possession. These Macedonians lived in the country of Macedon, lying to the north-east of Greece. The Greeks had always considered them barbarians or foreigners, but acknowledged that their kings were of Greek race ; and Greek was certainly the language spoken at the Macedonian court.

Philip of Macedon.

One of the results of Pelopidas's northern wars was that Philip, a boy of the royal house of Macedon, was brought to Thebes, and lived there for some time as a kind of prisoner. Though he was a boy in age, his mind was already the mind of a man, and he learned much about Greek affairs while living in the leading city of Greece. More particularly, he must have studied Epaminondas's new way of winning battles, and must have found out how very ready most Greek statesmen were to take bribes.

When he returned to his own country and began to rule it, first as regent, and soon after as king, he began to strengthen and enlarge it in every possible way—by civilizing his people, by improving his army, by getting the nearest good seaports into his hands, and by extending his power over his inland neighbours as well. His great improvements in the army were partly borrowed from Epaminondas, partly devised by himself.



COIN OF PHILIP OF MACEDON.

The Macedonian Phalanx.

It is clear that Epaminondas's device of making his left wing very deep, and throwing it forward to open the battle, was meant to meet a particular case. It was specially contrived for beating a mixed army, of which the best soldiers stood in the right wing, but were not formed up very deep. Philip meant to have an army that would beat all other armies whatever, no matter where their best men stood, or how deep they were formed. So he gave the main body of his heavy-armed infantry a much longer pike, to be used with both hands, and improved the fittings of the shield so as to leave the left hand free. Before his time the Greek

pikeman handled his pike with the right hand only, and had to use the left to keep his shield in its place. Then he formed the bulk of his army—not one wing only—into deep bodies, something like Epaminondas's left-wing formation, only not so deep. By these three changes—lengthening the pike, freeing the left hand to hold it, and deepening the formation all along his main body—he turned the old Greek “phalanx,” or fighting order, into the famous “Macedonian phalanx.” For about a hundred years this Macedonian phalanx was reckoned the best fighting order in the world. The pikes being so very long, every front-rank man had not only his own pikehead, but the pikeheads of at least the three men next behind him, sticking out between him and the enemy; in fact, the whole front of the phalanx was covered with several rows of sharp points. Till the Romans, fighting in their quite different “open order,” beat Pyrrhus's men in the Macedonian array, King Philip's phalanx was believed to be the best fighting order in the world. Before Philip's time the Macedonian infantry had been good for very little, and the Macedonians had trusted mainly to their cavalry; and they still made great use of cavalry along with the improved infantry phalanx.

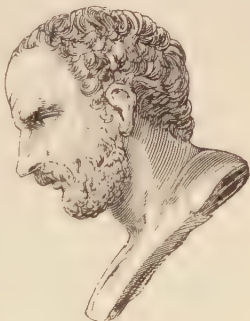
Fair Means and Foul.

But though Philip leaned much on his strong army, he never used it if he could do without it, preferring always to get his own way by bribery or false dealing. He had not the slightest feeling of shame about using such means, but simply looked on them as cheaper and more convenient than fighting. After he had seized Mount Pangæus to the east, he had a plentiful supply of gold—both for bribery and other purposes—from the mines there, and to guard these gold mines of his he founded the town of Philippi. For all that, if the Greeks had been united among themselves, or if their leading men had been honest and not on the lookout for bribes, I do not think Philip could have conquered them.

By hard fighting, by lying, and by bribery, Philip made himself master of most of the Greek towns lying between his country and the sea, of part of Thrace to the east, and of Thessaly to the south; but the Athenians sent a force to Thermopylæ, and stopped him there. So he turned northwards again, and went on with his conquests in Thrace, and in Illyria to the north-west. Then he took Olynthus, the strongest of the Greek towns lying between Macedon and the sea, and at last managed to pass Thermopylæ, so that he was master of the middle part of Greece itself; from there he passed on into Peloponnesus.

Demosthenes and "The Philippics."

Meanwhile a great speaker had arisen among the Athenians, Demosthenes, who became the most famous of all Greek speakers. At first he was quite unsuccessful, and could not get the restless, noisy Assembly of the People so much as to listen to him; but by patience and practice he taught himself to speak, and the citizens began to listen to him at last. The great thing he had to tell them was to beware of Philip, and to act along with Thebes and the other Greek states in defence of Greek freedom. His great speeches made against Philip are called "The Philippics," and nowadays we call any speech made against a particular person by the same name; Cicero's speeches against Antony, for instance, are called "Cicero's Philippics." Demosthenes was a great man like one of the great men of the best days of Athens; but his countrymen were grown foolish, and he could not save them. In the end, after his old enemy Philip and Philip's son Alexander were both dead, the Macedonians hunted him down, and the



DEMOSTHENES.



PLAIN OF CHERONEA.

last great Athenian was forced to kill himself, that he might not fall into his enemies' hands alive.

Philip in Greece.

When Philip made his way into the middle part of Greece, he had actually been asked to come by the Thebans, in order to put down their enemies the Phocians. This he did, but he soon showed that he meant to be master of Greece, and at last the Thebans and Athenians united against him. This was what Demosthenes had been working for; but it was now too late to save Greece. At Chæronea, in Bœotia, Philip met them, and defeated them completely. This defeat really ended the freedom of Greece, though the Greeks went on talking about freedom for nearly two hundred years after. Philip did not use the Greeks cruelly; on the contrary, he played the part rather of a champion than of a conqueror, and was intending to lead the Macedonians and Greeks against the Persians, when he was murdered.

338
B.C.

Philip was a great man, for he turned a small and weak kingdom into a great and strong one, a wild country into a partly-civilized one. Moreover, he really admired and valued the civilization of the Greeks, and especially of the Athenians, and did not treat them harshly after they had once submitted to him. But he used bribery and deceit to gain his ends, and we cannot praise him as we praise Epaminondas, or Washington, or any of the great men who have been honourable and true as well as great. Of all modern men the one that was most like King Philip was King Frederick the Great of Prussia, and the history of the rise of Prussia into greatness is curiously like that of the rise of Macedon.

Alexander the Great.

Philip's son Alexander—always and rightly called "Alexander the Great"—was more of a real Greek than Philip himself. His favourite reading was Homer, and his teacher

was Aristotle, one of the greatest of all the Greek philosophers or thinkers, who, though not an Athenian himself, had studied at Athens under Plato (p. 148). Alexander



COIN OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

carried out the great plan for the conquest of Persia which his father had formed, and which many people in Greece had been thinking of ever since the famous retreat of the

Ten Thousand. With his half-Greek Macedonians, the best-drilled soldiers then in the world, he invaded Persia, 334 B.C. won the three great battles of Granicus, not very far from ancient Troy; Issus, at the bend of the coast near the northern end of Syria; and Gaugamela or Arbela, far away to the eastward, just beyond 333 B.C. the great river Tigris. All the huge Persian kingdom —from Egypt to Indus, from the Black Sea and the

Caspian to the Indian Ocean—fell into his hands. He even crossed the Indus, and won victories in the country which we call the Punjaub, now part of British India. He was one of the greatest conquerors that ever lived; and besides that, he was no mere senseless slaughterer, like Jenghiz Khan or Timour, but a great founder of cities. The famous city of Alexandria in Egypt, which still bears his name, is only one of many cities founded by him. And his conquests spread the Greek language—which means also Greek thought—and, in some degree, Greek civilization, all over South-Western Asia



ARISTOTLE.

and Lower or Northern Egypt. After all his 323 B.C. victories he died in Babylon, the great capital of the immense kingdom he had conquered, before he was thirty-three.

Spread of Greek Influence.

From the death of Epaminondas I have told you the story of Greek and Macedonian affairs as shortly as possible, because, in a way, the greatness of Greece ended with Epaminondas, though, in another way, it only began with Alexander; for it was Alexander that first spread the influence of Greece far beyond the older Greek borders. What follows may be told still more shortly.

After Alexander's death most of the eastern part of the country he had conquered soon became almost as thoroughly Asiatic again as if he had never lived. But west of the Euphrates the countries which he had ruled were divided up into a number of half-Greek kingdoms, ruled over by his generals and their descendants. Of these, the one that lasted longest was Egypt. In old Greece freedom was still talked about, but there was not much of it; for the most part the Greeks there were more or less under the power of the later kings of Macedon.

Greece Conquered and Conqueror.

At last the Romans, who had been growing strong while the Greeks grew feeble, conquered Macedon and Greece, Western Asia and Egypt, and so were masters of all that Alexander had ruled, except the country east of the Euphrates. You have read, no doubt, of these conquests in your Roman history. They took a long time; for from the first Roman conquest of Macedon, in 196 B.C., down to Augustus's occupation of Egypt, in 30 B.C., is a space of one hundred and sixty-six years. In 196 B.C., after beating the Macedonians, the Romans solemnly gave the Greeks back their freedom; but they had neither sense enough nor goodness enough to keep it, and fifty years later the Romans finally conquered Greece, and made it a part of their dominions.

196
B.C.

30
B.C.

146
B.C.

The Romans, as you know, were great conquerors, and,

as a rule, they thought little enough of the people they conquered. But even the Romans could not altogether despise the Greeks. Before they conquered them it had begun to be the fashion at Rome—and a very good fashion too—to learn the Greek language. Greek was, in fact, the only language, except his own, which an educated Roman learned as a matter of course. And they not only learned Greek and read Greek books: in almost everything, except the arts of fighting, ruling, and road-making, they found the Greeks were better than themselves. Greek poetry and plays, Greek prose books, Greek pictures, Greek statues, and—as far as beauty is concerned—Greek buildings, were all better than anything of the kind that the Romans could make. And as far as the Romans ever learned to make such things at all, they learned by copying from the Greeks. As one of their own poets says, “Conquered Greece overcame her rough conqueror.” Thus the Romans spread the influence of Greece in Western Europe, just as the Macedonians had spread it in Western Asia. And even when the Romans became the masters of Greece and Macedon, South-Western Asia and Egypt, Greek remained the language of educated people there. That is how the New Testament came to be written in Greek. Again, that is why the first Christian missionaries to Europe, such as the Apostle Paul, must certainly have preached in Greek. Now the language in which a man is writing or speaking will also, if he knows it even tolerably well, be the language in which he is thinking. Therefore the question of what language was chiefly used by the first preachers of Christianity in Europe is not merely a curious one, but is also of real importance. Though Christianity began among the Jews, it was in a Greek shape that it came into Europe, and this makes a real difference to us Europeans to this day.

Greece in Later Times.

Now this is almost the end of what I have to tell you about the Greeks; but never think that it is the end of Greek history. There is really no end to any history. Sometimes, indeed, a people passes out of sight, as the Ten Tribes of Israel did, and then the historian has to say, "Here we must stop, for we do not know what became of these people afterwards." Yet, of course, the consequences of what the Ten Tribes, or any other vanished people, did and were do not stop, but go on acting still; just as the consequences of what you and I do and are will go on acting after we are dead. And as to the Greeks, they have never vanished at all. As long as there was a single great Roman state, they remained part of that state. When the single Roman Empire was divided into the Western and Eastern Empires, they were a part of the Eastern Empire, and the ancient Greek town of Byzantium—under the new name of Constantinople—was its capital. When the Turks came from Asia and conquered South-Eastern Europe, about four hundred and fifty years ago, the Greeks passed under the cruel rule of the Turks, who treated them almost as slaves. Then, less than a hundred years ago, the Greeks of old Greece, with the help of other Christian nations, including our own, got back their freedom, and set up a single free Greek kingdom, of which Athens is the capital. But in Constantinople and elsewhere there are still many thousands of Greeks living under the power of the Turks. You may have heard people say that these modern Greeks are not descended from the famous old Greeks at all, but I think this must be a mistake. Though Greece was conquered by the Macedonians, Romans, and Turks, and though its people have often been slaughtered, they never were all killed out; indeed, the cruellest conquerors never could have killed out all the people of a country so mountainous and so much cut up by the sea. No doubt the modern Greeks are of mixed

race, as all the modern nations of Europe are ; but I have no doubt myself that they are, in great part, what they call themselves—"Sons of the Hellenes." The language that they speak is the old Greek language, with only such changes as one might expect to have taken place in so many hundred years. It is true, of course, that they have not shown themselves either so brave or so wise as the Greeks who beat the Persians. But neither were the Greeks who were beaten by the Romans so brave or so wise as the Greeks who won Marathon and Salamis ; yet they were undoubtedly their descendants, and we take a certain interest in them for the sake of their ancestors.

Influence of Ancient Greece.

And in another way the ancient Greeks themselves are living yet—that is to say, they still influence us, partly through what is left of their beautiful sculptures and buildings, and much more through their books. Ever since the Turks took Constantinople in 1453, and drove many learned Greeks to take refuge in the west of Europe, ancient Greek—which had been almost forgotten in Western Europe—has been one of the languages regularly taught in our universities and schools. And the reason of this is that, besides the New Testament, many other books, including some of the best in the world, were first written in Greek. You cannot nowadays read any more beautiful poetry in any language than Homer, any wiser history than Thucydides's history, any better account of what is meant by right and wrong than Aristotle's *Ethics* ; and these are only three names out of a great many that I could give you. To this very day our best thinkers are guided by the thoughts of the ancient Greeks.

If this history has interested you, I hope you will go on and read other and fuller histories of Greece. In this short account I have only been able to tell you what seemed to me most important, and have had to leave out a great deal that

is perhaps quite as interesting as what I have put in. You might spend many years merely in learning what there is to learn about the ancient Greeks. After that you might read about other nations, ancient and modern, and in this way you might spend a long and busy life merely in studying history. Even then, of course, you would not know all history: for history is like a living tree, and will always go on growing as long as there are men on earth. If you go on with the study of history, you will find, not only that what I have told you is only a small part of the history of ancient Greece, but also, most likely, that I have made some mistakes. Not that I wished to make mistakes—I have, on the contrary, tried hard to avoid them—but that it is very hard to know the truth, and harder still to tell it.

And now I have only one thing more to say. History ought to be interesting, but it ought also to be useful. In reading it you should always try to learn not only what happened, but how and why it happened; not only who did a thing, but how he came to do it, and what his purpose was. If reading history does not make you better and wiser, fitter to be a freeman, and to take your share, great or small, in helping to rule the great British Empire, you had better shut up your history books and set to work on something else. For all the learning in the world is not of the least value unless it helps one to be good and sensible, and to do what is right.

Pan-gæ'us
Phil-ipp'i

Ill-yr'i-a
Ol-ynth'us

Chær-o-ne'a (*ch* like *k*)
Gran-i'cus

Gau-ga-me'la
Ar-be'la

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